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BEN KENDIM



# BEN KENDIM

A RECORD OF EASTERN TRAVEL

BY  
AUBREY HERBERT

EDITED BY  
DESMOND MacCARTHY

SECOND EDITION

LONDON  
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## EDITORIAL NOTE

**A**UBREY HERBERT was born in 1880, and died in September 1923. He was the second son of the 4th Earl of Carnarvon, who was Colonial Secretary in the ministries of Lord Derby and Disraeli, and afterwards Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

A year after leaving Balliol, an appointment at the British Embassy at Constantinople gave him opportunities for travel in the Near East. He was a born traveller, ardent and unprejudiced, and his spontaneous friendliness and fearless sympathy won the confidence and affection of people of all types, peasants, fellow-travellers, wild tribesmen in Albania, soldiers in remote Turkish garrisons and politicians in Stamboul. Travel was to him not only the adventure of youth; it was a determining influence in his political life.

He entered Parliament in 1911 as Member for the Yeovil Division of Somerset. Though his political career was interrupted by four years' fighting, he held almost from the time he was elected until his death a unique position with regard to Near Eastern questions. He understood the intricacies of Balkan politics, and the rulers of both Turkey and Albania trusted him as an unprejudiced friend. He had, therefore, the experience of being frequently treated both as advocate and adviser by Turkey and Albania, and he was listened to as an expert on Eastern affairs in Parliament.

The present book, though it covers only a small

period of his life, is in a sense an autobiography, though it does not reflect the extent of Aubrey Herbert's influence in the Near East. In 1919 he published anonymously *Mons, Anzac, and Kut*, a book of war memories, which bring vividly back the early days of the war, that spirit in which men first rushed to arms, half joy of life, half readiness to die. It was natural that he should turn once more to memories, when suddenly in 1922 he had to face loss of sight and the menace of perpetual blindness.

He had nearly finished this book when he died. Unfortunately the concluding chapter was unwritten, a chapter in which he hoped to bring his impressions of Turkey and the Near East into relation with the most recent events, and to forecast the future.

D. M.

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## NOTE

OUR thanks are due to the Editors of *Blackwood's Magazine*, *The Edinburgh Review*, *The National Review*, *The Saturday Review*, for their kind permission to reprint some of the matter which appears in this book.

M. H.  
D. M.





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Gold-dusted memories of the Past  
Abide like friends, but falter,  
Like morning mirages that last,  
Yet lasting, later, alter.

Ah, was that mountain quite so high,  
And had its flowers that scent?  
Could winds be friendly and as shy,  
That filled night's starlit tent?

And did it taste so good, that wine,  
At the dear journey's end,  
Beneath the whispering island pine,  
Beside a singing friend?

God knows the answer to these things.  
Man is a dreamer, age and youth,  
And none forget the sound of wings,  
No rainbow's traitor to the truth.

And if these colours were not fair  
As memory paints, still let them stand,  
To be as perfect and as rare  
As all the ghosts of that dream land.

## PREFACE

THIS book was written, I regret to say, mainly for a selfish purpose. I was condemned to bed and could not use my eyes ; I had nothing to do and found amusement for myself and constant employment for my friends, who visited me, in dictation. Owing to the fact that my circumstances made research and reference difficult, what I have written is useless from the point of view of a guidebook, and does not aspire to be consecutive history. It is sometimes a photograph of events ; at others a painting of memories through mists. And what interest it has lies in those great and picturesque lands that provide inevitable adventure for every traveller. Travelling has been a delight to me, but the journeys and the people who live in my memory are not always placed in ordered sequence.

I went to the East by accident, as a young man may go to a party, and find his fate there. Japan was my first post, which delighted me, but Japan was very far away. Her national life was already plainly mapped out ; she intended to be the great industrial and military power of the Far East, and the transitional stage, of amazing interest to those who witnessed it, was already past when the Anglo-Japanese Treaty was signed by Lord Lansdowne. There was no permanent attraction for an Englishman in that enchanting land, unless, wearying of his own country, he were to become first a Japanese scholar and then a Japanese.

Now, Constantinople was a three days' journey from

my home ; and when, through the kindness of Lord Sanderson and Sir Nicholas O'Connor, I was offered the humble and irresponsible post of honorary attaché to H.M. Embassy in Turkey, I accepted joyfully. I hoped that it would open the way to places like Tiflis, Bokhara, Samarkhand, the Yemen and Albania, and that I should easily learn Turkish, Albanian, Greek and Persian. Though I failed lamentably as far as languages were concerned, a door and a window were opened to me that have never since been closed.

Members of the House of Commons sometimes boast of the perfect allegiance of their constituents : that is largely vanity. In the East, however, it has been different ; for it has depended upon the West, and in the past an Englishman in Turkey who was a disinterested friend of any one of the nationalities within the Ottoman Empire really had his own unassailable niche. All the peoples in Turkey, including the Turk, were in a chronic state of shipwreck ; the English were in permanent possession of the lifeboat, though often that lifeboat could not put out to sea. David Urquhart had the affection of the Circassians and has had no successor in a later generation ; Professor Browne stands alone in Persia. Lawrence is the undisputed champion of the Arabs ; Bouchier and the Buxtons were the heroes of Bulgaria ; Miss Durham restored Albania to the memory of Europe ; Steed, Seton-Watson and Edward Boyle were the advocates of a Serbia that existed in their minds ; the Greeks have had a multitude of archæologists, classical scholars, and there are a few remaining romantics devoted to their renaissance. Turkey has had the friendship of many British officials. Doughty Wylie, who lost his life and gained a V.C. fighting the Turks, whom he understood and admired, had a mausoleum built for him on the headland that he won. It would appear that there is a quality in some Englishmen

that is rarely possessed by men of other nations, which produces unique relations between themselves and the people of the East. Marshal Lyautey, and an Italian here or there, can be cited as exceptions, but this particular characteristic seems to be a monopoly of Englishmen, both great and unknown. The sergeant of Lord Cromer's guard may have possessed it as much as the Chief whom he served. Many friends of mine and I myself, regretting blunders and cruelties on both sides, have retained the same feeling for Turkey and the Turks to-day that we had ten years ago. The world in the East is still very bitter, but it is no longer an official museum for different brands of petrified hatred, and to those who are fond of Turkey the pleasure of returning to Stamboul, to the Bosphorus, and the hospitality of Constantinople is undimmed and undiminished.

The early chapters of this book are memories of my first days in the Near East as a diplomatist, a time of which I kept no written records. The greater part of the book deals with rides and journeys in places which in those days were little known, and the rest is the account of an interested spectator who makes no claim to be impartial, of great events in the heart of the Turkish Empire.

I found some difficulty in choosing a name for this miscellany of adventures and impressions. When I was attached to the Embassy I wrote a number of articles, some of them for *Blackwood's Magazine*, which were passed by the authorities. There was a rule that no official should publish articles under his own name dealing with the country where he was stationed, and my *nom de plume* was Ben Kendim. It is Turkish for "I myself," and I can find no more convenient label for a book which is a record of personal experience and casual travel.

AUBREY HERBERT.





PART I  
A DESULTORY JOURNEY  
CONSTANTINOPLE



## PART I

### A DESULTORY JOURNEY

EARLY in 1904 my mother and I were travelling for pleasure in Egypt when the Russo-Japanese War broke out. I hoped that I might be able to obtain an appointment as an assistant Military British Attaché to the Japanese Army, but in this I was disappointed. So I turned my thoughts to the Near East, where there was sufficient uncertainty to excite the imagination of any young man, and applied for the post of Honorary Attaché at Constantinople. While I waited for my answer, it seemed to me an excellent plan to make what acquaintance I could with some of the people of the Ottoman Empire on a picnic, before I sat on an official chair in the Chancery at Constantinople. My mother agreed, and we went to visit her brother, Esme Howard,<sup>1</sup> who was then British Consul-General in Crete.

From the moment of landing, I fell in love with the island. Later, I came to know many of the Greek islands, some barren as lighthouse rocks without lighthouses, others gardens of delight. Cyprus is lovely; a melodious land and a fit birthplace for Venus, but its railways and its Greek stationmasters speaking clipped English to their colleagues, have modernised it and have diminished its serenity. Mitylene is a charming annex to Anatolia. It is well equipped with modern comforts and civilised with ancient hospitality, standing like a house delicately

<sup>1</sup> Now Ambassador at Washington.

painted beyond grim and fortified mountains. There, Greeks with Turkish titles and French cooks entertain luxuriously. It was a lotus-eating land, where one's dreams were disturbed by bright conversation. Imbros to me is only a war memory, with a hope that never materialised of rest from the heat of the Dardanelles in high, cool mountain villages. I could continue this list of Homeric islands; but for fear of overstraining the sympathy of the reader at the very beginning of this book, I will speak only of one other friend—Lemnos—before I describe Crete.

To my mind, it is worth the long journey from London to land at the Port of Lemnos and to drive across the island to the village of Castro, which is shady in summer with trellised vines and full of the scent of roses. For at Castro, when day ends in a glory of light, the shadow from the Holy Mountain, a beacon of darkness eighty miles distant, quickly lays its black pathway across the golden sea, until it reaches and exactly fills the tiny harbour and lies like a dark diamond in a fiery setting.

Our fleet anchored at Lemnos before its various divisions were sent to land upon the Peninsula; and during the first fighting, which lasted some time, we were told at Anzac that Rupert Brooke had died at Lemnos, when I wrote these verses which were published in *The Times*:

R. B.

It was April we left Lemnos, shining sea and snow-white camp,  
Passing onward into darkness. Lemnos shone a golden lamp.  
As a low harp tells of thunder, so the lovely Lemnos air  
Whispered of the dawn and battle; and we left a comrade there.

He who sang of dawn and evening, English glades and light of Greece,  
Changed his dreaming there to sleeping, left his sword to rest in peace;  
Left his visions of the springtime, Holy Grael and Golden Fleece,  
Took the leave that has no ending, till the waves of Lemnos cease.

There will be enough recorders ere this fight of ours be done,  
And the deeds of men made little, swiftly cheapened one by one ;  
Bitter loss his golden harp-strings, and the treasure of his youth ;  
Gallant foe and friend may mourn him, for he sang the knightly truth.

Joy was his in his clear singing, clean as is the swimmer's joy ;  
Strong the wine he drank of battle, fierce as that they poured in Troy.  
Swift the shadows steal from Athos, but his soul was morning swift,  
Greek and English he made music, caught the cloud-thoughts we let  
drift.

Sleep you well, you rainbow comrade ; where the wind and light are  
strong  
Overhead and high above you, let the lark take up your song.  
Something of your singing lingers, for the men like me who pass,  
Till all singing ends in sighing, in the sighing of the grass.

Crete has its own strongly marked individuality ;  
it is masculine, as masculine as the Minotaur. The  
other islands are soft, lovely and perfumed, the homes  
of dead gods, and even more of past goddesses ; Crete  
is the meeting-place of the fighting races of Asia,  
Africa and Europe. But though two continents, Asia  
and Africa, have forced their way in the past to ports  
like Candia, Khanea and Rhetymo, and to some  
distance beyond, the mountains are held by men of  
pure Greek descent. They alone, of all the Hellenes,  
retain the ancient Grecian beauty. It is not im-  
probable that the legend of the Minotaur may have  
been founded upon the fact of a virgin tribute to the  
islanders of Greek girls selected for their loveliness,  
who have transmitted their classical and austere  
features to their descendants. In the high mountains,  
the people had hardly ever seen a Turk. They lived  
a picturesque and a primitive life, and their code of  
morals was said to be the strictest in the Mediterranean.  
I liked and admired them. They had the grace of  
mountaineers and the courtesy of an old civilisation.  
They carried their weapons with pride and elegance ;  
their native dress was distinguished by a tight coat,  
full Turkish trousers and handsome buckled boots that

came half-way up to the knee. My whole sympathy was with the insurgents. Hajji Mikhali, the hero of the south, seemed to me another Kolokotronis (of whom I knew little at that time), and the warrior monks in their lofty monasteries, with their rifles, their breviaries and their home-made liqueurs, seldom failed to cast their spell upon the traveller.

My mother and I, with an escort of Cretan gendarmes, rode through the Vale of Mourniez, aflame with red and white oleanders, growing upon the banks of a river that split into a score of foaming mountain brooks. We rode up to the heights of Omalo, covered with asphodel and the hyacinths and jonquils of the Mediterranean spring. On the way we were nobly entertained by priests, peasants and monks, who at that time were fasting themselves. It was an enchanting journey, through beautiful valleys lit with flowers, and little rivers that shone under the shadow of great peaks.

When we returned to the Consulate at Khanea, the political situation had become aggravated. The old regime had just come to an end; and while the mediæval island was only a turbulent eddy in European politics, the fierce warriors of the country, who sought union with Greece with guns in their hands, were a very lively problem to their rulers.

Indeed, the Cretan situation at that time was singular. The old Turkish regime had been put an end to in 1898, when the lives of British soldiers had been lost at Candia owing to a rising of local Bashi-Bazouks. These troops were in Crete in consequence of an international occupation in which British, French, Russians, Italians, Germans and Austrians all took part, in order to produce peace in a turbulent island which threatened to set all the Balkans ablaze.

After a period of government by six admirals, it was decided by the four first-named Powers to establish

Crete as an autonomous State, with its own flag, gendarmerie and Constitution, but still under Turkish suzerainty ; and to invite Prince George of Greece, younger son of King George, to act as High Commissioner under international protection. Some European troops were retained in the island to keep order and to protect the Moslems. But Germany and Austria, unwilling to offend Constantinople, withdrew from this scheme, and the only troops on the island at the time I speak of were British, French, Italian and Russian, while each of the Powers kept a ship stationed in Suda Bay. The island was divided for military occupation into five sections, of which the central one of Candia was held by Britain. Three others were occupied by the Russians, French and Italians, respectively, while at Khanea there was an international section in which all troops were more or less represented and placed under a French Commandant-Supérieur.

Prince George, on accepting the post, believed that this regime was only a stepping-stone to union with Greece, and that the stepping-stone would soon become a bridge. But the Powers, fearful of raising the Eastern Question in any form, refused to change the *status quo*. The Prince's duty was therefore to repress the ardent patriotism of the majority of the Cretans, who longed for Union, a disagreeable task for one who laid claim himself to shining patriotism. Prince George made no attempt to perform this unpleasant duty. He stimulated the ardour of the Cretans secretly in the belief that the Powers, if they were sufficiently worried, would give way. He therefore opposed the policy of M. Venizelos, one of the original leaders against the Turks, who was all for the peaceful development of the island until the Powers should consent to union. M. Venizelos and his Liberal followers were accordingly permanently



debarred from office, and, given the insurrectionary tradition of this island, it was not surprising that one fine day they took to the mountains and, raising the Greek flag, hoisted Prince George with his own petard. The Prince declared he would not give orders to the gendarmes to fire a shot on men who were fighting under the Greek flag, and the Powers with one accord issued instructions to their Consuls-General that not a hair of any of their soldiers was to be endangered in repressing the insurrection. The result was a serio-comic situation which lasted for many months, indeed years, even after the insurgents, who had no mind to face the rigours of winter in the mountains, capitulated, and Prince George was finally induced to abandon the post of High Commissioner, to be replaced by a very able Greek statesman, M. Zaimis.

For some time I had been trying to convert the ancient Greek of my school days into modern Romaic, and had succeeded up to a point. One morning I was walking with a Cretan, when I saw a band armed with every weapon except harpoons, coming up the road, with their captain marching in front of them. "Who is that?" I asked, and was answered, "Aftós eine o kirios Venizelos kai tha páyi eis ta óri, na kamni antartisin,"—"That is the lord Venizelos, and he is going to the mountains to make an insurrection."

M. Venizelos was beginning to make his name as a leader of fighting men, and as an orator who had magnetism. The islanders were behind him. He had two assets. He carried notes for eloquent speeches in his pocket, and he had a rifle slung upon his shoulder. The notes and the rifle, in happy alliance, made an irresistible appeal to the Sfakiots, who considered, not without reason, that they were the bravest of all the island mountaineers.

M. Venizelos had my youthful sympathy.

It was six years later that I landed on an intensely hot day in October in the Piraeus. The port was alive with excitement ; vehement Greeks were gesticulating and, as in the days of Cleon, each group in a café listened to one orator. I was told that Venizelos had been made Prime Minister, that he was on his way from Crete, and would declare war on Turkey, in Athens, that night. When night came it was stifling, hot and moonless. M. Venizelos drove up five miles from the Piraeus, through a lane of light and cheers. "Zito Venizelos! Zito o polemos!"—"Long live Venizelos! Long live the war!"—shouted the torch-bearers and the populace. The darkness was a pandemonium of enthusiasm and anticipation. He spoke high up from a small balcony, where there shone one acetylene lamp above the great square of Athens, and between his perfectly spoken words the night was silent but for the breathing of the crowd. He might have been speaking from a different planet in his detachment from the popular passion. He addressed the Athenians from his high pulpit, and he said: "There shall be peace and there shall not be war!" I thought of the strange contrast of that night, with the other occasion upon which I had seen him in Crete. Then he was an unknown leader of rebellion, inconspicuous to his Turkish enemies and an embarrassing ally to his Greek friends, while on that night in Athens, as Prime Minister, he held the peace of Europe in the hollow of his hand. "There shall be peace," said he, and the citizens of Athens renounced their dear desire for war, and agreed to postpone their hope of Union with Crete.

Later, M. Venizelos, whom I had often met, reproached me for asking anti-Greek questions in the House of Commons. "These questions," he said, "are all published in the Greek newspapers, and in Greece they believe that you reflect the opinion of a

typical Member of Parliament. It creates a bad impression. It is few of us who know that you are in a minority, and indeed, I am informed, a rebel against the Government."

I told him of the incident in years past, when I had seen him, an armed insurrectionary, marching to the mountains of Crete, and said: "In those days, Excellency, you were in a minority and you were a rebel against the Government. I think, therefore, that you should have charity towards other minorities, and other rebels who are not in your camp."

He stood up and clapped me on the shoulder. "We must both do what we think best for our different countries," said he.

Turks and Albanians were bound by their blood to be the foes of Venizelos; but between him and the Turks the quarrel was implacable, while the Albanian feud was open to compromise. Englishmen who were his political opponents were not converted, but were inevitably attracted to this gifted descendant of ancient Venice. The Turks were his enemies, and the struggle was to the death. But in spite of hatred, he retained statesmanship, and to his opponents who were not of Balkan blood he could show a magnanimity of opinion that is rare.

The European situation was reflected in Crete. The obvious lack of unity amongst the Great Powers gave the islanders, who were fine fighters, but ignorant of the alphabet of politics, considerable hope. They were proud of their insight and they rose in their own estimation. The Cretan form of warfare differed from Macedonian crusading. In Macedonia the fight was between race and race. Bulgars, Serbs and Greeks professed the same Christian creed, with slight differences which did not justify murder. Their racial creed became fanatical. Each country in turn dispatched its bands of brigands into the mountains,

to slay indiscriminately those who talked a different tongue. The Vlach was the only neutral; he very wisely learned all languages and thrived on his detachment and profited by the follies of others.

In Crete, on the other hand, there was a savage conflict of creeds, not of nationalities. There were Turks in the ports, but the ancient race of Cretans all talked Greek. A large number had become Moslems, while the greater part were Christians. Their system of retaliation differed again from that of Macedonia. In Macedonia murder was reciprocal and, like a typhoon, circular. Macedonia and the Balkan States systematically played the game, and a double game; they wanted to acquire territories by eliminating their opponents, and they wanted to horrify the Great Powers of Europe (whom they believed to be Christian) to the point of interference by atrocities committed by themselves or by their competitors. In Crete this was not the case. The method was more judicial and exact. If an Orthodox Greek was killed in Khanea, a Moslem Greek might be chosen to expiate the crime at the other end of the island.

When I returned to my uncle Esme Howard's house, after my short spell of travel with my mother, I regretted that I had applied for a post at Constantinople, for the lure of the Cretan mountains was upon me, and the picturesque and splendid men of Crete seemed to me to be the heroic descendants of the Klephts who had fought the Turks in Greece. My uncle was very far from being a Turcophile, but he listened to these views of mine without enthusiasm. He believed that I might add to his difficulties by joining the insurgents in the mountains, and when Sir Nicholas O'Connor proposed to send me for a time to Crete, he received the news with horror.

We had very pleasant days making excursions from the Consulate at Khanea to gardens and monas-

teries, or to the magnificent harbour of Suda Bay, across a country of olive trees whose girth and majesty were a constant surprise after the olive-yards of other countries. Some of these olive trees must have measured six yards round; they were twisted and bent, but venerable and fruitful beyond belief.

The actual moment added its own salt to these expeditions, for the naval officers of all nations came to the Consulate, where my aunt, Lady Isabella Howard, was a most delightful hostess, and on our riding parties there were often friends of the day who might be the technical enemies of to-morrow.

At that time there existed a dreadful community upon the island of miserable neglected lepers, who lived in partial isolation in various places. Foreign residents in Crete were inquisitive when they engaged a cook about his past relations with the lepers. There was a legend that the lepers prided themselves on their cooking, and a firm belief that meat handled by these afflicted men was contagious. I remember riding home as dusk was falling, through the streets of a little village, where men were sitting out upon the doorsteps, and raising my eyes to a sight so horrible that it seemed an hallucination, until I realised that I was looking at the face of a leper in the last stages of the disease. My uncle in Crete and my mother in London did what they could to procure better treatment for these exiles of humanity, whose condition was ultimately improved owing to the intervention of M. Venizelos.

I did not know how much leave I should be allowed when once attached at Constantinople, and therefore cut short my stay in Crete to visit Macedonia before I was ordered to join the Embassy.

Salonica from a distance appears a cool, white virgin among cities, gowned in cypresses. Aloof from the mountains that tower above her, resting by a

deep blue sea, she is most beautiful; but she has the soul of a lovely pacifist who has grown fat upon war throughout the ages and has profited upon tears and blood, but has never, except in remote ages, done anything more active than urge others to fight.

I had the good fortune on arriving in Salonika to meet Mr. Consul-General Graves and to gain his friendship. He was known to the juniors who were his friends as "Uncle Bob." His life had been passed in storm-centres of the Near East; he judged volcanic movements calmly and his considered gentleness endeared him to the passionate people with whom he had to deal. The men who served him were devoted to him; his Montenegrin servant had neither ears nor eyes for any other man.

Graves had a love of exercise, and it was his habit on his daily walk through one of the streets of Salonika to look round furtively, and if he saw no passers-by, to sprint for a couple of hundred yards. This gave rise to the legend amongst the natives that he was mad and haunted by evil spirits, from whom he fled.

He took me to see Hussein Hilmi Pasha, Vali of Macedonia, a fine figure of a man, black-bearded and handsome. He had received five wounds in the Yemen that time had healed and he had an honourable career behind him. It was my first introduction to a Turkish Seray, and, like most strangers, I was struck by the apparent terror and confusion in the vast chamber. Round it sat all kinds of men upon divans, who spoke in whispers. Coffee was brought by a servant, holding one arm respectfully across his stomach. The Pasha carried on two conversations at once, successfully, with messengers who brought him documents to sign, and with his guests. "Ah," he said, "fortunate is England, happier than my country. We have Yemen, we have Macedonia, we have our financial

troubles. Was ever such accumulated affliction given to one people at once ? ”

I said, “ We have got Ireland.”

“ Ah, monsieur, ne m'en parlez pas de ça. It is not worth comparing with Macedonia.”

He spoke with appreciation of the foreign gendarmerie and their area of occupation in Macedonia. His attitude was dignified, but mournful, and he said little that was encouraging of the future.

In 1903 a fierce rising had taken place in Macedonia ; Monastir itself had been besieged. The rebellion was put down with great difficulty and with resultant harshness.

The rising had not been due to purely local circumstances. The Balkan Powers were behind it, and some Great Powers were behind the Balkan States, but humanitarian feeling in England was aroused. Lord Lansdowne, having achieved the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which secured for the Far East freedom from war for a period, was doing what was possible to effect the same object in South-Eastern Europe. In the end military officers of the Great Powers, with the exception of Germany, were established in five areas, for the purpose of inspecting the Gendarmerie. Actually, their powers were greater. There was also an international Finance Commission for Macedonia, which advised Hilmi Pasha, the Inspector-General. These circumstances, involving as they did friendly co-operation in administrative work between Graves and Hilmi, were new and interesting, and if Macedonia had been an island cut off from the rest of the world there would have been a fair prospect of success.

When the great day of the revolution came, Hussein Hilmi played a noble and a disinterested part. The prime movers of the Union and Progress Party insisted upon his joining the revolution and proclaiming the constitution. He answered quite simply that they had

it in their power to put him to death, but as long as he was a servant of the Sultan he would not act without the commands of his Imperial Majesty. The advice which he gave the Sultan was to accept the Constitution. For a long time Abdul Hamid found it impossible to estimate the position, then finally he agreed. Hilmi Pasha went out before the Konak and proclaimed the constitution to an enormous crowd, which cheered and cheered and then fell silent for the Vali's speech. Three times he cried aloud, with not one echo of applause, "Long live His Majesty the Sultan."

Salonika, by the blue sea and amongst the cypresses, is only a poor footstool for Olympus. It is a town of intrigues and persecutions. In the days of my first visit it was more free than Constantinople; there was not the same vigilance, and the Jews, who are the majority of its inhabitants, have always enjoyed a greater liberty than any other subject race in Turkey. They have, indeed, shared with the greatest heartiness in assisting other people to massacre the Greeks and Armenians, who are their commercial rivals.

The coming storm had not yet broken, but already its mutterings were to be heard. The Grand Orient<sup>1</sup> was at work. There were links between New York and the bootblacks of Salonika, and again between Salonika and the unruly Albanians. Talaat was studying the literature of the French Revolution; Karasso was engaged in Freemasonry; Enver, in the mountains of Macedonia or in a sailing boat in the Gulf, was engrossed in tactics.

The Jews of Salonika, generally known as *Dunmés* (converts), were the real parents of the Turkish revolution. They are a definite people—Hebrews, but indefinable as to creed. The popular verdict was that they were only nominal Moslems and were true

<sup>1</sup> The Chief Masonic Lodge of the Near East.



followers of the Pentateuch, bowing their heads in the temple of Rimmon for the sake of profit. At that time, only the most industrious student of the Near East knew of their existence. There was no man to prophesy that the *Dunnés* were to be the chief authors of a revolution whose results were to shake the world.

At Salonika I also met and made a friendship that was all too short with Colonel Bonham, head of our Gendarmerie. He was tall and soldierly, with light hair and a ruddy face, friendly to all and delighting in his life and work ; he drank of a very happy philosophy, and poured out draughts for his friends.

Later I spent an unforgettable Christmas with him at Drama, and with my other friends of the Gendarmerie, the two Stephens and Colonel Tyrrell, later military attaché at Constantinople. Mrs. Tyrrell was the only lady. Bonham's relations with the Turks were excellent, and his men took delight in serving him. We used to go shooting jackals on the frozen Macedonian moors, and we all thought it one of the happiest Christmas parties we had known. Of that party, the two Stephens were killed, and Tyrrell died during the war, while Bonham, after having survived years of Macedonia, succumbed to typhoid in Constantinople.

It was many years afterwards that I returned to the Konak, where I had met Hussein Hilmi Pasha. During the war I was with the Italian troops as liaison officer for some time. On one occasion I had come down from the front to take a rapturous "leave" at Salonika ; I went to Headquarters, where I happened to have many friends. I found the Staff at G.H.Q. collected gloomily round a small Turkish boy of eleven, Abdurahman. When they saw me their faces lightened, and they said : " Come along, you settle this business."

" What is the matter ? " said I to the little Turk,

He answered with great dignity: "You have imprisoned my father and my brother, and my father has died, so that I am left the head of my family. I have eight women to look after, and the Greeks have now sent refugees into my house. This is an unheard-of business, and against all tradition."

I said to him, "O Abdurahman, you have the care of a family; you must then understand this. Each man looks after his own business. Now you have asked us to interfere in what is not our business. This is an affair for the Greeks."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Abdurahman, "it is the business of the English, wherever they are and at all times, to correct disorder and to put things straight. This is well known. I must ask you to do this on this occasion which is important to me. I beg you to take me to the chief of the Greeks."

Logic was on our side, but the small boy defeated us. I stepped into a cab and drove with him to the old Konak, where I had last seen Hussein Hilmi, long after my first visit. I found myself again in the great chamber where I had been before, when it was thronged with suitors and serving-men and men-at-arms, pulsating with life like an artery of the Turkish Empire. That night it was empty, dark and cold, and there was only one remote figure sitting at a desk amongst shadows. I walked down the length of the room, and began to speak in French to the Chief of the Greeks. The man at the table stood up and shook hands with me. "Ah," he said, "it is years since we met," and I recognised Alexander Pallis, a friend, from my own college at Oxford. He was at that moment administering the affairs of the refugees, and promised to look into the question of Abdurahman. Pallis was always as good as his word, and he did what he had promised immediately.

The next day I went to see how things were with

my own eyes. I found an old, large, dilapidated Turkish house, where storks built and flowers grew, and Abdurahman came to the door smiling, to tell me that all was well. His old mother was, however, anxious to make herself heard. The ancient lady pushed open the door, and mingled her thanks with the recital of grievances. "What is this?" said Abdurahman. "Canst thou not see that these be men? Come not into the street. Where is the grace of mingling complaints with thanks?" And the head of the house pushed his mother indoors again. For some years after that I used to receive an annual letter from him. It was the letter of one man of the world who was under a debt of gratitude to another. I hope he achieved his desire, which was to go to Robert' College.

It was at Salonika I met a faithful friend of the future—the Albanian, Riza. We were to travel in Asia, the Caucasus, Albania, the Persian Gulf and Arabia together, and he to cheer the way by singing ballads and telling stories of the mountains that he loved. I had been attracted to his race by "Odysseus's" book on Turkey, and he came to me at once without stipulating what his wages were to be. We liked each other. He was a mountaineer and a fighting man. I found it difficult not to give offence by laughing at his curses in laying out my dress clothes, an entirely new occupation for him.

We started on our first journey together to Monastir with Mr. H. N. Brailsford and Mr. Hurd. This was my first sight of the haunting and haunted land of Macedonia; later, I came to know the country well. At that time I found it impossible to realise that within three days of London the law of tooth and claw ruled uncontrolled in human relations.

Once, riding with a Macedonian, I asked him if there were bears in that part of the country.

"There are bears," said he. "God give all bears trouble!"

"Why?" said I.

"On a day," he said, "a bear, not far from here, hunted me round a rock for half an hour."

"Had you not got your gun?" I asked.

"I had my gun, Effendim. I had indeed just shot a man. I dared not shoot the bear. The gendarmes were after me and near. God give all gendarmes trouble too!"

I often wished to leave the train and ride to any one of the mysterious villages with alluring names, but pursued my journey to Monastir, a windy town high up, sombre but alive, and with some fine buildings. It took its name from a monastery amongst the beech woods on Mount Peristeri. There, once, it had been reported by the British Consul that he was to have been ambushed by *comitadjis*.<sup>1</sup> He applied for arms to defend himself. The matter had been referred to the Embassy, possibly even to the Foreign Office. In any case, the answer that was returned was not reassuring to a nervous man. He was informed that, if he was killed while unarmed, his murder would be an asset to his country; if, on the other hand, he had weapons, there would be no such advantage in his decease.

The country round Monastir had been and was still unsafe. Hurd and I were lent the horses of the Russian Consul who had been killed some three months before as the consequence of striking an Albanian. Since then his horses had stood idle in the stable. Mine instantly ran away, surprising me by its cleverness in negotiating all the difficulties of that rough country at top speed. It was not easy to find my way home.

The next day Riza and I departed to the town of

<sup>1</sup> *Comitadjis* = patriots to their countrymen, robbers and murderers to their enemies. The literal translation is "committee men."

Perlepé, and I felt for the first time the fascination of contact with the Balkans. We drove in a small victoria with a mounted guard behind and in front. The landscape was uncultivated and wild. In the morning long lines of hooded, burdened Bulgars drifted out of the mist on a highland crest and passed into other mists down the valley. Cattle and herds were few.

In the inn at Perlepé all conversation was carried on in whispers. Before we started at dawn a Bulgar *comitadji* came up to me. "Ah," he said in broken French, "times have been bad for us. When is Europe going to interfere?"

"Have you been in the mountains?" said I.

"Yes," he answered, and I wondered at the immunity of a rebel beside my Turkish escort.

We proceeded on our way with some linguistic difficulty to myself. The Romaic that I had learnt was not that which Riza understood, and I attempted to make myself clear by ineffectual pictures. I found obstacles with regard to my cuisine. I could draw a chicken and an egg but practically no other article of diet, such as an omelette or buttered eggs. At Uskub I gave my escort the slip, to be instantly arrested by a Turkish patrol, from which I succeeded in escaping with some trouble.

After two or three years, I found myself again at Uskub and heard a story, part of which was certainly true, though there may have been details that were legendary. My train was about to leave for Salonika, when an excited official cried to me to wait. "Come," he said, "and speak to the English guard." I shook hands with the man whom he introduced and, expecting him to be an English mechanic, spoke to him in ordinary, quick English. This he did not understand. He could talk a few words of halting English, but preferred to speak in Greek or Turkish. The events

that had made him guard upon that line are, even after a lapse of years, too recent to admit of the publication of the true names of the principal actors.

Fortune had carried a British officer, Smith, who had served with distinction in the Crimea, to Macedonia. There he had taken to himself a Greek woman who had borne him a number of children. He was a man of character and made both friends and enemies. Amongst the latter was a prominent man of English blood, "Mr. Jackson." Jackson was intimate with the Macedonians, and integrity was not one of the qualities which he demanded from his friends, amongst whom was a brigand known as Nikko, who happened to be another enemy of Smith. Nikko and Jackson, it was said, plotted the destruction of Smith. The English officer was a formidable man and Nikko would not attempt his capture in the open country. "We shall kill him," said Nikko, "receive no money and become detested. Or he will kill us, and that serves no purpose." A better scheme was devised. One night, with a band, Nikko set fire to the outhouses of Smith. The Greek woman implored her husband for her sake and the sake of the children to surrender, which he did. He was ultimately ransomed by Sir Henry Layard, and Nikko, with a magnificent gesture, pressed fifty Turkish lire into the hand of Smith.

I told this story one day at dinner in the House of Commons, and heard a colleague of mine say, "Ah, my poor uncle!"

I asked, "Was Smith your uncle?"

"Yes," said he.

"Well," I said, "I think you should say, 'My poor cousin, the English guard of Uskub!'"

I caught the next train and went down the valley of the Vardar to Salonika, where I again saw Graves. Duty called from and to Constantinople, but not very

loudly.<sup>1</sup> The voice of Asia Minor rang much more clearly in my ears, and Riza and I embarked for Smyrna, where, as usual, the traveller was made welcome at the Consulate.

Smyrna was a kind and delightful town with an atmosphere of its own, quite different from that of Constantinople. I could have spent happy days there and in the surroundings, but the Embassy had now begun to make urgent inquiries as to when its latest luxury in the shape of an honorary attaché would arrive, and so to Constantinople I went.

I chose the roundabout way of Konia, the oldest city in the world, home of the dancing dervishes and the *chelebi*,<sup>2</sup> and once the capital of Asia Minor. I passed a dreamy time in that town of Rip van Winkle, where I found one of the small nests of Turkish exiles that in those times were dotted over the remote places of the Ottoman Empire. These exiles were usually good and harmless men, many of whom had high ideals and aspirations that were the cause of the punishment inflicted on them.

One could spend profitable though sad hours discussing with them the present wretched state of affairs and the greater catastrophe to come. At that time my ignorance of the country prevented my acquiring knowledge that would later have been valuable.

From Konia the train propelled itself with convulsive movements to Afium Karahissar, where it rested for the night. I shared the hotel and dinner with a troupe of Armenian actors and acrobats, who seemed to make an easy and safe living amongst a population that was reputed to be the enemy of its race.

One of them entered into intimate conversation

<sup>1</sup> A telegram had arrived saying that I was to report at Constantinople, but no specific date was mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> The chief of the dancing Dervishes.

with me. "Who are you? Where are you going, and why?"

I said, "My name is Herbert, going to the Embassy at Constantinople, because our Ambassador wants me to."

"You must indeed be good and great," said he. "And now you shall hear all my life."

He gave me a sketch of his life, which seemed to me to have been the career of a bolting rabbit and left me breathless.

"Now," he finished, "your help is valuable and essential. I have fallen in love with a girl, a relation of mine, most unfortunately within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. I have evaded these laws by becoming a Protestant, for in that religion there are no limits as to what one may do. But more is necessary. Speak, I pray, to the Ambassador."

I said, "You can't expect the Ambassador to take up your case! What do you want him to do?"

"Let him write to the Patriarch," he answered. "Let him write constantly."

Some months later that poor Armenian left a Damascus blade for me at the Embassy, anonymously. I had the greatest difficulty in tracing the donor, whom I found happily married to his cousin. We all had tea together. After congratulations and good wishes I explained that I could not claim to be responsible for his happiness. His answer was to present me with another Damascene sword.

On this journey I had been suffering from fever and rarely recollect a more dismal scene than the arrival at Haidar Pasha. The rain was falling, the wind was blowing on the Bosphorus, and beyond there sparkled the wet lights of Constantinople. The towering form of Ibrahim, Moslem Montenegrin and Embassy Kavass, appeared to meet me and all was well. On the next morning, which was Sunday, I went to the Embassy chapel, free of my fever.



## CONSTANTINOPOLE

I HAD gone to Turkey with no knowledge of the people or of the country, and indeed with a feeling of antagonism to the Turks, to their methods and their policy. I was quite sure that I could never be won to the side of their friends. Turkey seemed to me to be an Empire whose foundations were rooted in iniquity, and after my first brief visit to Macedonia I wrote these verses. I copy them now as a record of my feelings at that time :

Ye who preach to us patience, how deep do ye deem our wrong ?  
 Oh, rulers of Christian nations, have ye waited in patience long ?  
 Have ye prayed on the open hill, out under the naked sky,  
 " God grant that the Turk may kill, that our women at home may die " ?

Have ye mocked at the Sacred Name, for the sake of another's life ?  
 Nor flinched at the filthy shame, that sears like a red-hot knife ?  
 Have ye known what was past despair, as ye stooped to a dying wife ?  
 Oh, ye who have said, " Forbear. Have done with your wanton strife " ?

We have watched how an old priest dies from the sickness that men call fear,  
 Blank dread in his tortured eyes ; we have heard what we would not hear ;

We have listened to children's cries ; seen when we would be blind  
 Maids treated in shameful wise. We have waited : we know our mind.

By the fires of our own homes, red, we have lifted our hands to God,  
 We have sworn that we would not tread the way that our fathers trod.  
 We have sworn to the gentle Christ for vengeance alone to live,  
 For the sum of their guilt sufficed. Let God, if He can, forgive.

Oh, lords who are strong and wise, shall we take what our masters give ?  
 Better die as a wild beast dies than live as the cattle live.  
 Is there one of your words unbroken, your promise of pleasant things ?  
 Our innocent dead are token of the worth of the words of kings.

Ye are girdled with safety, preachers, ye know that your lives are sure.  
 Ye would give us your wisdom, teachers, who bid us endure, endure.  
 Ye never have hated the night for the sake of those that were dear.  
 Ye say, " Ye are mad with fright." By God, we have met with fear.

Now listen to us, O lords, to your brethren about to die.  
Have done with your oaths and words, or be damned with your own  
damned lie,  
For surely as Christ was slain, and surely as Christ arose,  
We have called on you, called in vain. Now we fight to that end God  
knows.

“ Grant that the Turk may kill ” ; later, I altered this to Kurd, for with experience I learnt that the Turk was not an artist in murder, nor the only lord of rapine. In spite of the fact that I changed my opinion and these verses were anonymous, they have pursued me remorselessly ever since ; I have even found broken bits of them in *The Times*.

Let me draw attention first to a significant fact. Englishmen, official and unofficial, who have been consistent and active critics of the Turks and their government, before and after the War, have travelled in Asia Minor and have lived unmolested in Constantinople. Such toleration of critics could not have occurred in any European country, with the possible exception of England. Ireland makes mincemeat of any man who is even suspected of being hostile ; France, Italy and Germany all expel opponents. Yet until to-day, lifelong critics of Turkey, who are foreigners, have lived tranquilly and died respected in Constantinople. Sir Edwin Pears, the author of the famous dispatch to *The Daily News* which gave the information of the massacre at Batak, was a case in point. I soon discovered that not only all the neighbours of the Turks indulged in the same passionate outbursts, but that the Balkan States often pursued this policy as an aggressive propaganda, where the Turk only resorted to it as a means of defence. I came also to understand that where vengeance is sown in the soil, where charity, Christianity and economics are not weighed in the balance against the memories of past glories and the dreams of future Empire, it is not easy to apportion the balance of

criminality. The Bulgar has mixed brigandage with his politics ; the Serbs are often inspired by pure blood-lust ; and the Greeks, most sensitive to European opinion, are not so superior to their environment as Philhellenes would have us believe. An accusation is made that the Greeks have massacred five hundred Albanians on the Voiusa ; the Greeks, deeply shocked, explain in detail what has really happened. There has been, they admit, an untoward incident, in which ten Albanians, mainly brigands, lost their lives, but the responsible Greek authorities will most certainly be called to account. Accuse the Serbs of having put to death five hundred Albanians on the Drin, and you will receive quite a different answer. The fiery Serb will reply proudly that such is not the case ; his gallant countrymen have done better than that—from a thousand to twelve hundred Albanians have been massacred. This has always seemed to me the real cultural difference between the Greek and the Serb.

I arrived at Constantinople in a drizzle of rain, and the next night, a Sunday, I dined at the Embassy with my chief, Sir Nicholas, and his wife Lady O'Connor. That evening, we heard many stories of the Armenian massacres, and as Simon Lovat and Dick Molyneux, who were staying in Constantinople, and I returned to our hotel, we were startled by loud cries and the stormy appearance of a band of half-dressed men, with staves and clubs, rushing towards us down the Grande Rue. With spontaneous presence of mind, we ran like hares, and arrived breathless at the Pera Palace. There we were told that those men, whom we had feared as the advance-guard of a mob, bent upon massacring Armenians and casual foreigners,

were the fire brigade of Constantinople, proceeding to perform their duty. However, in those days they were almost as formidable as the murderers of Armenians.

Life, for the staffs of the Embassies, and particularly of our Embassy, was very pleasant in Constantinople and Therapia. Sir Nicholas O'Connor was a tall Irishman with a commanding presence, deep blue eyes and a very attractive personality. He had had a long and distinguished career as a diplomatist; he understood the East and he liked the Turks, with whom he had a great influence. There were many who believed that he was a better judge than any of his colleagues of the undercurrents in Eastern politics and the trend of future events. He always showed me the greatest kindness. I was devoted to my Chief and his family. There were three children, Ferga, Muriel and Eileen, and we used to ride in the Forest of Belgrade, boat on the Bosphorus or Golden Horn, or go down to the Marmora in the *Imogen*, the Embassy yacht. Sir Nicholas was supposed to have no knowledge of Eastern languages, but I remember once, when he asked me the Greek word for something which I had forgotten, and I gave him, unscrupulously, the Turkish word instead, thinking it would do just as well, that I was instantly discovered and reprimanded.

Lady O'Connor was extremely kind. The staff was constantly invited to lunch and dine, and many strangers passing through Constantinople came to the Embassy. Sir Nicholas was an Irish landlord and far ahead of his class and time in his outlook. All politics interested him, particularly home politics. His judgments were very shrewd, and events in the East might have been different had his advice been taken.

In discussing a question, he used sometimes to become completely absorbed in one thing, to the

exclusion of all others. He was known, going down the Bosphorus in his *mouche* (launch), to stand up, in his uniform, and to take the salute from warships with a panama hat upon his head. As a conversationalist he had great charm, and an unusual memory gave rare colours to his recollections.

Mark Sykes wrote of him :

“ Sir Nicholas always seemed to me somehow to have stepped out of the pages of one of Thackeray's eighteenth-century novels or the memoirs of Horace Walpole. His tall, frail figure, his languid, almost weary movements, his charm of manners, his soft and gentle voice all served as a singular setting for his eyes, which once seen were never to be forgotten. They were of a deep intense blue and seemed indeed to have an almost hypnotic quality ; penetrating yet kindly, they showed the strange sympathy with pathos and suffering which in an Englishman would be sentimentality, but in an Irishman comes of understanding.”

The close of his long and honourable career was sad, for he did not receive the recognition that his services deserved.

In those days serious politics were mainly confined to the Bagdad Railway. Marshal von Bieberstein, a majestic figure, was the German Ambassador. In Constantinople the popular view was that he had been exiled from Germany by the Kaiser as a man of first-class ability to do a work of great but second-class importance, far from the Fatherland. England, it seemed, had agreed to postpone the crisis of her conflict with Germany, and was prepared to acquiesce in German exploitation of Turkey and Mesopotamia.

This was not the personal policy of Sir Nicholas O'Connor, though even in those days an Ambassador was becoming a glorified clerk at the end of a telegraph line. In 1905, under Abdul Hamid, Turkey was look-

ing towards her spiritual sister, Germany. The Germans, aiming at *Weltmacht*, understood power, and followed thought-out methods of controlling subject races. The Turks, too, understood power, and, in their own fashion, governed areas that were largely inhabited by subject races. The Englishman was respected in Constantinople, but deference was paid to the Germans. It was simpler for a member of the British Embassy, who arrived late in Constantinople at the landing-stage of Tophane, to speak in German to the Turkish sentry than to explain in Turkish that he was a member of the staff of the Embassy at Therapia. At this time a few German words did more to smooth things with the Turks than an official British position.

The work in the Chancery was sometimes slack and sometimes very hard. The Counsellor was Walter Townley; Henry Lamb was First Dragoman; Percy Loraine and Eric Phipps, who both talked the purest French, were secretaries; John Tudor Vaughan, who was always appointed peace-maker when troubles occurred, and E. G. Lister, who learned half a dozen languages of the East, including Armenian, at the same time, were also secretaries at the Embassy.

My eyes had always been delicate, and I had learnt to type-write blindfolded; in consequence I had a greater proficiency than the other members of the Chancery. For this reason, I used generally to be given the copying to do at the last moment, when the bag was leaving and speed was urgent. One of the staff dictated and I typed, while two others read over what I had taken down. But my work did not always reach the same high standard. Once, a dispatch that I had copied was sent back to the Head of the Chancery from the Foreign Office, as a model of everything that a dispatch ought not to be. It was written to Lord Lansdowne, and it began "My Dorl."

When I arrived in Constantinople, George Young, who had achieved a laborious record in his monumental book, *Le Corps du Droit Ottoman*, was just leaving. He had been consistently anti-Turkish, and left that spiritual legacy to some of his colleagues.

The first independent work which Sir Nicholas gave me was to keep the chronicle known as the Butcher's Book of Macedonia, and it was this work that shook my faith in all that I had heard about Turkey; for before me lay the evidence that the crimes of the non-Turks constantly exceeded those of the Turks. The second memorandum which I was given to write was on the character, aspirations and political importance of the Kutzo-Vlachs, Roumanians of Macedonia. These people have been perhaps best described in *Turkey in Europe*, the classic of "Odysseus":

"Their villages are nearly always placed in the highest and least visible spots, the favourite position (naturally somewhat rare) being a hole on the top of a hill. This custom no doubt originated in the time of the barbarian invasions, when the plains were overrun with Slavs, Bulgars and Avars, but it has been maintained on account of its obvious advantage as a means of eluding the Turkish tax-collector. Snow or mud renders such villages inaccessible in winter, and in summer they are almost uninhabited—at least, by men. Every Vlach has a natural love of wandering about in the open air in charge of animals. Many are shepherds; but perhaps the most characteristic of their trades is that of Kiraji, or an owner of horses and mules, who either lets them out to travellers or wanders through the country himself as a travelling merchant or peddler on a large scale. In the summer months one can hardly travel anywhere between the Danube and the Pindus without meeting long strings of pack-horses winding up the mountain

passes or plodding across the dusty plain, conducted by roughly-dressed, handsome men, whose bright eyes and unusually intelligent faces make one wonder why they do not play a more conspicuous part in the Eastern world. But it seems as if they had little desire to do so.”<sup>1</sup>

Charles Bleck was the Registrar at the Embassy. There were many gifted men in the Levant Consular Service, chosen not solely on account of, yet with careful regard to, their talent for languages, but there was probably no one who equalled Bleck in his finished scholarship. He was born to the classics, as others are born to mathematics or engineering. We once had a bet in the Chancery that no one in the Embassy could translate “padlock” into five languages off-hand. I won the bet when I put the question to Bleck. And he had other gifts besides his linguistic talent; the mornings that were idle in the Chancery were never dull when I was able to interrupt his work and enjoy his conversation.

In Constantinople there are as many communities as once existed in Byzantium. The old English community included many names, such as Whittall, that are famous throughout the Near East. These British colonists resemble the children of the Crusaders in their knowledge of manners and customs of the East, but they differ from the descendants of the Crusaders in their resistance to the decadence which the climate has generally imposed upon northern races. Each generation returns for schooling to England; many go to Oxford and Cambridge and practise English athletics before they return to Constantinople. They have proved, probably, one of the most sober, respected and hard-working bodies of colonists in the world. They have not unnaturally a certain

<sup>1</sup> *Turkey in Europe*, page 371.



admixture of Greek blood, but this has not affected their physique or their character, though it has improved the looks of their ladies.

The Embassy staff mixed with the British Colony, though perhaps not as much as it might have done. It lunched and dined fairly often at the Cercle d'Orient, the club that has a stale aroma of iniquity, peculiar to it, and more rarely at the Cercle de Constantinople, where the merchants and the Consuls, the soldiers and the sailors and the travellers gather to hear news in the evening. We were always made welcome at the Austrian Embassy, though we saw little of the other great representatives. We had an amusing society of our own. Miss Dorina Clifton, living at Candilli across the Bosphorus, was the belle of Asia; Miss Eveline Whittaker, living in Constantinople, was the belle of Europe. Picnics to Moda, expeditions to the islands, were numerous and spirited, and they generally came to a close in the house of Admiral Sir Henry Woods Pasha, for Lady Woods kept open house and extended hospitality as generous as it was delightful. Her sister, Miss Whittall, knew every mosque, every merchant in the bazaar and the exact value of every article for sale. She also knew all the languages, though she often had some difficulty in remembering which one she happened to be speaking and it was not easy to be certain if she were translating from Greek or French.

Admiral Sir Henry Woods's salary was paid irregularly by the Turkish Government, and often in kind. It was not uncommon to arrive at his house and find his pay awaiting him in the form of bleating sheep outside his door, or sacks of corn.

Life was very gay in those days; the Ambassador was in favour of youth enjoying itself. Once, for a bet, I did a high jump which nearly destroyed a cab, and laid me up for some time: this delighted him.

On another occasion, a naval lieutenant and one or two of us went to a hashish den in Galata. Owing to a misunderstanding caused by my imperfect Greek, we were attacked by a number of people who seemed to have leapt, with knives and demoniac faces, out of the illustrations from *The Strand Magazine*. This also pleased the Ambassador. There were other incidents of a similar nature that met with his sympathetic interest.

We used constantly to start our expeditions to the Forest of Belgrade from the house of Dr. Clemow, taking lunch at Therapia. Dr. Clemow was physician to the Embassy. He was a finished Russian scholar, a passionate chess-player who hardly ever met his match, and one of the kindest men it was possible to meet. One day Clemow was waiting for us to lunch. He was smoking a cigarette on the first floor in one of the low-built houses in the steep streets of Therapia, and, flinging his cigarette into the sunshine, he was galvanised into sudden life to perceive that it had fallen upon the high-piled dark black hair of a Greek woman, who was passing, bare-headed, down the street. She did not feel its light weight, and the blue smoke went up in rings into the summer air. Clemow was horrified, but did nothing. An old and benevolent Turk met her, and, with the kindness and the silence of his race, beat her on the head, without any explanation, in order to extinguish the burning cigarette. The Greek woman, believing that she was being brutally attacked, shrieked aloud. A vivid scene took place in which Clemow played no part.

My quarters, when my sister Margaret came out to stay with me, were at the Hôtel d'Angleterre. High above the cemeteries, with their forest of cypresses, it stood, and a view of Stamboul and the Golden Horn, the beauty of which it is impossible to describe, shone

before us. When she returned to England, a depleted exchequer compelled me to tell Riza, my Albanian, to find some cheap place where we could live frugally. He discovered an enormous room for me, forty or fifty feet long, a room for himself and breakfast of sour milk and coffee for both of us, all for the very small price of six francs a day. I was astonished at this moderation, until I learnt its reason. One hot night, when I could not sleep, I heard a continuous clicking, and putting on a dressing-gown I went to investigate the noise. I passed down the passage into another room, where I found miscellaneous Constantinople playing roulette. Still the reason for the cheapness of my room did not occur to me, until, one night, returning late from a dance, I found a cordon of police about my hotel and myself under arrest. When I loudly proclaimed that I belonged to the British Embassy, I was immediately released. It was only then that I understood that I had been given this grand apartment at a nominal price in order that the presence of a British official might protect this amateur Monte Carlo from a raid by the Turkish police. This incident was kept from the ears of the Ambassador.

There were dances at the Pera Palace, the Summer Palace and in big Greek houses. Amongst the Greeks were some whom to know was to admire, but they were the exception, and the Embassy had not a high opinion of Greeks in general as companions. The most objectionable were the sons of the Greek bankers. Their manners were odious; and if they had kind hearts they kept that fact carefully hidden. In the winter of 1904 the Ambassador left for England with his family, and Sir Walter Townley, who had come to the Embassy early in the spring, took charge. I had known him and Lady Susan when Townley was chargé d'affaires in Pekin, where I had received much

kindness from them both. It was impossible not to be immediately attracted by Walter Townley. He was a perfect diplomatist, very direct and always calm. Things were never dull where Lady Susan was, and I felt it a piece of good luck to find, at Constantinople, the friends I had made in Pekin. They lived in a small wooden house, which held a rare collection of precious gifts and purchases from all parts of the world. Lady Susan had made a museum and a salon in one.

On a summer morning the staff was working in the Chancery at high pressure, when Townley came in, and said abruptly, "My house is on fire. It's burning like anything." The secretaries, engaged upon their various tasks, looked at him with vacant eyes, and said, "Oh," but remained motionless. "Is nobody going to do anything?" he asked, and then we all sprang up. He and I drove off towards the German Embassy, while he talked quite calmly of Embassy business. We turned to the right and went down the precipitous, cobbled road towards the Bosphorus, and there, sure enough, was the fire. Thick columns of smoke were rising from his house in the sparkling sunlit air. Cries of "Yanghin var" ("There is a conflagration") rent the air. The Turkish fire brigade was hard at work. There were shouts and the exhilarating music of trumpets round the building. Beyond the Bosphorus flowed by in deep and glittering blueness, and at twelve o'clock came the daily salute from the anchored warships. It was a merry and stimulating scene for a disinterested spectator.

When we arrived at what had once been Townley's home, we were met by the German chargé d'affaires, who said to him, in a strong German accent, "Your jewels are all safe."

"Thank you so much," said Walter Townley. "And what about my wife?"

We all did what we could, but the whole building had gone to heaven in a sheet of flame. As he and I left together, after hours of salvage work that effected little, a Turkish fireman belatedly turned the fire hose on to us. "That," said Townley, "is a nice thing to happen to a man who has only one shirt in the world." Practically all their beautiful and irreplaceable treasures were destroyed.

Walter Townley and I used often to dine together at the restaurant of Tokatlian, in the Grande Rue de Pera. I taught him the names of Turkish dishes—*kush-konmaz*, asparagus, "that upon which no bird can sit," which always pleased me by suggesting the pathetic surprise of a tired bird deceived in the hope of a perch; *imam-bayildi*, "the priest fainted with delight"—this was a delicious pastry; *etmek-kadaif*, "bread and velvet"—that is, bread and Devonshire cream; *yaourt*, sour milk, said to be the butter in a lordly dish which Jael gave to Sisera, and made him sleep so soundly and so fatally. Townley enjoyed these dishes, while I enjoyed his conversation on all things.

Sometimes, though not very often, the younger members of the staff were invited to dine at other embassies. I can remember, upon one occasion, being the youngest and certainly the shyest at an enormous dinner. On entering, my host seized my hand, and, to my inexpressible embarrassment, pressed it to his starched shirt, while he gazed over my shoulder at a vision of beauty behind me. Some confusion apparently existed in his mind as to who was the owner of the hand.

When Townley, after he became chargé d'affaires, was received in audience by the Sultan, he took me with him. The audience lasted some time. We went to the Selamlık on a Friday morning, when, as was the custom, the Sultan drove himself to the

Mosque—a huddled figure in a phaeton, followed by a number of pashas, some of them Englishmen in Turkish service. On either side were ranks of Albanian troops, who cheered and shouted, “Padi-shahimiz chok yashar !” (“Long live our Sultan !”) Afterwards we were taken to the terrace, and shown into a small room, where we were received by Abdul Hamid. It was the day of high ceremony, and the Palace Chamberlain, who interpreted, made ceremonial obeisance to the earth before his lord. I noticed the Sultan’s brilliant eyes and his tiny hands, small as those of a woman. He talked at length to Townley about a number of things, speaking mainly of China. He was well informed ; his manner was very courteous, and, except for the deep deference of the Chamberlain, there was no marked circumstance of authority and pomp. At the end of his conversation he turned to me, and asked if I had had a previous post. I said I had been in Japan. “They are a great people, and have a special interest for all the Eastern world,” said the Sultan.

Usually there was a high barrier between the Turks and European society. Few Turks dared to associate with foreigners, for the risk was great. It is no exaggeration to say that there was a pall of fear over the city of Constantinople. I remember a story that may or may not be true, but which is characteristic of those times : a foreigner asked a well-dressed Turk the hour, as he was crossing Galata Bridge. The Turk, who may, it is true, have been under suspicion for other reasons, was subsequently exiled, it was said, solely because he had been seen conversing with a foreigner. No one talked in the trams, and even in the Pera Palace it seemed that conversation was generally conducted in whispers.

There were exceptions. H.H. Damad Ferid Pasha, the brother-in-law of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, though

constantly under suspicion, used still to entertain royally at his palace at Balta Liman; delightful evenings were spent in his garden, with the Bosphorus lapping on its edge and the wind rustling in the Judas trees. Underneath all this there was a ferment going on of which foreigners could see but little, and the little that they did see struck most of them as neither formidable nor attractive. It looked as if "the sick man of Turkey" was going to die of inanition at last, leaving his possessions to the "doctors who would not cure and to the heirs who dared not inherit."

Once, when I was staying with a proud Turk, he said to me: "The other day I was riding across my property, when I met a peasant who was sowing seed on the rock as well as on the soil. When I told him that he was wasting time and money, he answered, 'Not so, for if God the All-Merciful can make the grain grow in the soil, cannot He also make it grow on the rock?' And," said my Turkish friend to me, "that is my country. We exist in the annual hope of miracles; and because we live in the age of faith, miracles do not fail us; but one day the miracles will cease, and then good-bye to my country."

Foreign ladies were seldom entertained in Turkish harems, but Madame Turkhan Pasha and other Albanian and Turkish ladies used to receive them occasionally, Englishwomen in particular. Once I was having tea in a Christian house, when two ladies came in: the room was dark, and I did not notice that the ladies were dressed in the Turkish fashion. We talked French, and after a few minutes I discovered their nationality. They were two of the "Désenchantées" of Pierre Loti's novel.

I was invited to dine on board our "Stationnaire,"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Stationnaires were European cruisers anchored in the Bosphorus for the protection of the foreign communities.

to meet that famous author, by the officers, who spoke little French. This dinner was not a great social success. Pierre Loti was not an Anglophile; conversation was laboured. Possibly because he had never known it, or had forgotten the language even more than I, I failed to draw the great man out in broken Japanese or on Japan. The Turks admired him greatly and with reason, but we English were unable to share their enthusiasm for Pierre Loti as a man.

When my sister was with me, we went dutifully sightseeing. Sir Edwin Pears took us round the walls of Constantinople, of which his knowledge was unrivalled. Another day we went to the Mevlevihan, and saw the Dancing Dervishes, who turn to the east because God is there, to the west because there also is His Presence, to the north and to the south because He abides there. At the end of the worshipping there was the spectacle of an ailing baby brought in, crying. It was put upon the floor, and a huge black man, weighing at least sixteen stone, stood upon it, in order to heal it. My sister was very indignant, but the baby ceased crying.

We went to Santa Sophia on the occasion of Leil-i-kudret, the Night of Power, when, according to the Moslem belief, prayers are granted. From the dark gallery above, we looked down upon the worshippers through a sea of light that illuminated the Mosque. They prostrated themselves rhythmically upon the ground, invoking the mercy of God, with a roll and noise like ocean waves breaking. None who see that sight are unmoved, but upon that occasion I, for one, felt something more than religious fervour in the atmosphere. I remembered lying ill in my house in Japan one spring morning, when suddenly the military bugles sounded, sending a premonitory thrill of something kindling and catastrophic through the air, as if they had been the heralds of the Russo-



Japanese war. Others, too, beside myself had a similar sensation on that Night of Power in Santa Sofia. A faint smell of musk pervaded the Mosque; this scent still brings back that night to me.

My sister and I also went to the Persian Festival. It is held in the Validé Khan in Stamboul on the Feast of Hasan and Husein, to celebrate the martyrdom of those two knights. A procession of hysterical devotees winds into the courtyard, many half-naked, led by a horse upon which white doves are perching, and behind this is another horse ridden by a child. The place is lighted by many torches; the devotees beat their naked backs with chains, and cut their flesh with swords. The rhythmical chant acts like a goad upon the worshippers, and as the volume of sound grows, so does the intensity of their passion. I was reminded of horses in a cavalry charge—driven by fear and intoxicated by the thunder of their own hoofs, rejoicing in panic. I watched one man through my glasses, working himself to the necessary pitch of devotion. Twice he failed, but the third time his whirling sword struck a vein in his forehead, and a veil of crimson covered him completely. The white horses and the white doves became red, as did the child and the pavement; a reek of blood came up to us, with the sound of savage shouting. As we went out, amongst the stream of fanatics that were surging from the courtyard, we were pressed against two stark figures, either dead or unconscious, covered in red sheets. It is said that the savage sincerity of the belief of the worshippers acts as balm to their wounds and prevents their suffering. Certainly that night we saw no signs of pain. We saw glittering eyes in dark faces, nervous hands holding swords that still dripped blood, and deep wounds; but though there before our eyes was sufficient cause for agony, there was nothing but elation and exultation in the bearing of the

worshippers. I have often seen the ceremony since, but never received again the same impression.

One of our favourite expeditions was to go up the Golden Horn in the afternoon, and after seeing the Mosques at Eyub, to leave that green and quiet cemetery and climb the hill to the house of an Armenian woman who told fortunes, listening for truth from a well. No one was allowed to cross a certain line of influence, between a grave and the well. Under swaying cypresses she recited incantations and listened to the answering lapping of the water before making her prophecy. Upon one occasion a number of us went to inquire what had happened to an article of value that had belonged to one of the party and had mysteriously disappeared. We were shocked to hear that a friend whom we all recognised from the charming description was responsible for the loss.

The bazaars, too, were a constant pleasure, with their drifting scents, the musical cries of the auctioneer and their many twilit contrasts: outside, the garrulous Greek, the fluent Syrian, the persistent Armenian, selling good and bad wares to the sound of many words; inside, the stillness of the spice bazaar, where old Turks with long beards sat motionless and incurious, nor allowed their prayers to be affected by the prospect of custom. Only once, in my experience, was their piety disturbed at the hour of prayer. My sister had gone to the Besestan (spice bazaar) with English friends, escorted by Riza. Three tall soldiers of one of the Ottoman nationalities pushed these English ladies, and particularly my sister. Riza first put down the china and glass which he was carrying, and then, with a yell of rage, sprang at the tallest soldier, whom he beat to his knees with curses and blows from the hilt of his dagger, until the man implored mercy. The old merchants left their prayers, and descended from their booths with all the haste their

dignity allowed, to protect and comfort the foreign lady.

I made friends with a number of the dogs in Constantinople; not all were willing to associate with an infidel, but rudeness amongst them was as rare as in the Turks. I forgave their few bites. They were various in type and character as men in that enchanted and fateful city. There were the one-eyed, mangy scavengers with dragging tail and limping paw, grand seigneurs and dancing soulless Delilahs. The less pleasant side of the dogs became apparent at night, when they did the work of scavenging amongst the refuse that was thrown into the streets from the hotels and houses. Then the dogs were out for business, and ceased to be the affable amateurs of the day, who had time to pass with their friends. While the rag-pickers investigated these heaps of filth, which gave them a scanty and a horrible living, the dogs snarled around them, jealous for their own perquisites. I always had a natural feeling of disgust when I saw these human figures crouching in the gloom, disputing with a circle of dogs, with bristling hair and gleaming eyes, the possession of horrors which should have been underground.

In the daytime the dogs lay about in amiable heaps in the sunshine, and they were treated by the Turks as lethargic friends who had dined, though occasionally Greeks and Armenians showed them furtive cruelty. Many of the Christians were of course as kind as the Turks to the animals, and the Turks were sometimes cruel; but as a rule the Moslem was a benevolent uncle to the dogs.

The dogs had their own Constitution, which was recognised by the Mussulman State and observed in detail by each pack; it was their right to lie and sleep in the streets. Still, traffic had to pass; where

the Turks were concerned, the dogs were given notice and gave way to carriages, grumbling, like one who says, "Well, of course, *if* you must—but I can't see the use." Their relations to each other were more complicated. Each pack had its own street, which it looked upon as its property; a dog from another district was allowed to pass through, but under humiliating conditions. He had to make a complete surrender of his dignity. He was obliged to lie on his back every few yards and wave his paws propitiatingly, while his suspicious hosts growled and barked about him. In the end he generally got through. Many of the dogs were lordly in their appearance, some were buffoons. There was a friend of mine who had suffered in fights; he had an ungainly limp, and knew that he had a comic appearance. I used to feed him and his colleagues at the corner of the street by the Royal Hotel, where the dogs and I could look across the green cypress-clad cemeteries, at the glorious view of the Golden Horn. One day I introduced the Buffoon to Andrew Ryan,<sup>1</sup> the Consul, who had to go in official clothing, top-hat and frock-coat, every day down the street, from the Embassy to the Consulate. The mangy dog, besides being a buffoon, was also a snob, and loved to appear in company with the well-dressed. After my introduction, he made Ryan daily ridiculous by the contrast in their appearance, when he caracoled, yelping hysterically, round his top-hat and frock-coat—one-eyed, mangy and disreputable—on his hind legs.

When puppies were born, some Turk always provided a basket, and by a series of miracles they escaped death from carriages. I never understood how the dogs lived without water, though this was often provided by charitable Turks, nor why in the great heat of Constantinople they did not suffer from rabies;

<sup>1</sup> Now Chief Dragoman at the British Embassy at Constantinople.

madness was unknown. I spent part of a very hot summer in Constantinople in a hospital at the crossing of big streets, and grew to believe I could distinguish the notes of the various packs.

The Turks show a great kindness to animals, yet they have also a curious disregard for their needs. They will not kill, but they allow death to come in cruel forms. One evening I had been playing with a woolly puppy, as night fell in Pera. Almost as I left it, I heard a rattle of wheels and yelping, and going back found that the puppy had been hurt by a carriage. I offered a big Kurdish *hamal* (porter) some money to put it out of its pain. He was ready to take it by its wounded paw from my hands, but would not kill it. "No," he said, "that is different. To take the soul (life) is wicked." And yet the man had probably taken an energetic interest in the Armenian massacres. As an illustration of this quality it is worth observing that the Turks used to cultivate silkworms, but in many places they gave up this trade when they discovered that the process of manufacture involves the death of the insect. In the end the unhappy dogs were put into no lethal chamber, but left to devour each other and die on an unhallowed island in the Marmora.

The Staff of the Embassy was encouraged to travel by Sir Nicholas; some studied ethnology, others politics, a few were antiquarians.

My Albanian and I travelled to the Russian Caucasus in the autumn of 1904. I had made friends in Constantinople with Mirza Riza Khan, the dignified and genial Persian Ambassador at Constantinople, who had written a poem to peace at The Hague Conference in thirty-two languages. He had property in the Caucasus and was glad to lavish kindness upon his guests. When I visited him, I stayed, not in his

own house, but in one he had rented. It was like living inside a chandelier, for it was encrusted everywhere with false jewellery of a startling brilliance. It was indeed a shock to wake upon a sunny morning in a kaleidoscope.

The Caucasus delighted me. I waited for scales to drop from my eyes for me to see the still unrevealed magic and mystery that enchants us in *The Shaving of Shagpat*; I even felt that this chandelier house might be a minor aspiration of a younger son of Hilpit the Builder. The scenery, too, was such as I had never seen. If Satan had wished to offer the Creator of the world his own possessions, for sheer splendour he could have found nothing more glorious than a summit in the Caucasus, where every vast and rolling valley seems the gateway to an Empire.

In Tiflis the population was mixed, but friendly to foreigners. It seemed to me that only the lacquer, and that rather a poor lacquer, was Russian. Many other races there remained the same as they had been from the birth of history; Persian, Georgian, Circassian, Tartar, speak as they have always spoken and dress like their forefathers. They had not troubled to learn Russian, and the only modification that the new rule had effected in their dress was that their ornate belts were filled with dummy instead of live cartridges. The dresses of the men were extraordinarily picturesque and various. I found German and Turkish the best languages in which to make myself understood. I was never tired of watching the graceful swagger of the Circassians, those extremely picturesque horse-thieves and daughter-sellers, so wonderfully described by Marmaduke Pickthall in *The House of Islam*. The Cossacks, too, looked fine and savage as they rode through the streets in the fiery heat. The Armenians who talked with me were, on the whole, more anti-Russian than anti-Turkish.

They quoted a saying which I had heard—"The Turks take the body, the Russians take the soul."

I left Tiflis after a very few days, to pay my visit to the Ambassador on his property at Borjum, and from there enjoyed with my whole heart expeditions with a cheerful party of Persians, whose wit was Gallic and whose appreciation of this glorious country expressed all that a stranger felt.

This visit of mine happened during the Russo-Japanese War, and the atmosphere was everywhere electric. Slavdom was on its trial; so, too, was the East, and England was allied with Japan. Consequently, the arrival of an Englishman on Russian territory produced excitement. It was while I was staying with Mirza Riza Khan that the Russians held up our P. & O. ship *Malacca* in the Red Sea. Now, in those days, when any event of unusual interest occurred, it was the habit of the Caucasians to cut telegraph wires before they did anything else. One morning I received a message in my chandelier house that the Persian Ambassador was anxious to see me as soon as possible. I lighted a cigarette, and flung the match into the grate, where some old newspapers of mine caught fire. I left these to burn and went to the Ambassador, who looked very serious. His Highness said that I was his guest and that no man had more respect than he for the sacred duty of hospitality; I was under his protection. But a crisis had occurred. As the telegraph wires had been cut everywhere he was not quite clear as to the nature of the crisis, but it was believed that war between England and Russia had been declared. The Governor of the Caucasus, Prince Woronzow-Dashkoff, had made inquiries about me. The Russians believed that I was military attaché, and proposed to arrest me and to keep me prisoner for the duration of the war. After expressing my gratitude, I said I thought it extremely

unlikely that there would be war, but considered that I had better return to Batoum, where there was a British Consul. We then had luncheon. The Persian military attaché and I drove home, followed by a troop of Cossacks. On returning to the chandelier house, I found Riza in a passion. He had discovered two men searching my room. The burnt papers in the grate had apparently fiercely excited them, suggesting to the official Caucasian mind the destruction of secret papers. Riza had used violence upon these persons. His own appearance had, I think, been one of the causes that had attracted attention to us. He was dressed in his finest national costume—a great, red, flat fez, with a mane of black silk that flows down it and behind it, which sets off the flashing eyes of the Albanians; tight black and white Ghég breeches and leggings; a coat and waistcoat which consisted chiefly of gold, and numerous revolvers and daggers. I could not move without being followed by a troop of Cossacks, so remained in the chandelier house until the train left at night. At the station the Persian military attaché came to me and said, “Do you see those two officers with their Cossacks?”

I said, “I have seen very little else all day.”

“Well,” he said, “they are going to arrest you. Pray accept it calmly. *Ils sont tellement brutaux.*”

I called Riza, and told him what was to happen, but added that I expected that he would be allowed to return, and that I proposed to give him money for the journey, and a letter to the Consul.

Riza said, “I have eaten your salt. I am not going to return and be asked, ‘Where is your master?’ This matter touches my honour. My life is yours.”

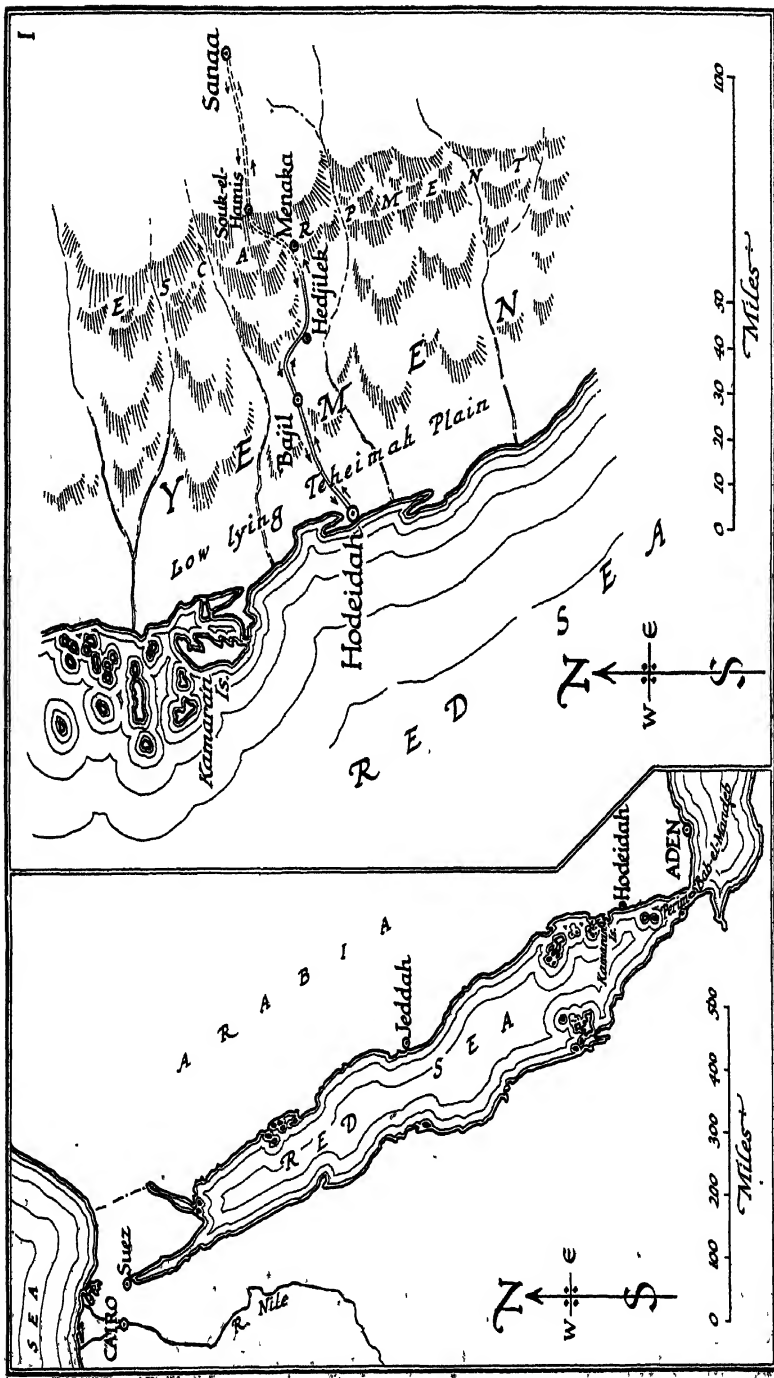
Nothing, however, occurred. For the last few nights I had been suffering from intermittent fever, but that night I slept soundly in the train. Next morning I found that my luggage had been searched,



but only my revolver taken. I went to see Mr. Patrick Stevens, the British Consul, who told me that the war scare was pure moonshine. As, however, my fever increased, I took a boat for Constantinople, and learned upon the voyage the value of *yaourt* as a sovereign remedy for illness.

**PART II**  
**THE YEMEN**







## PART II

### THE YEMEN

ONE day, early in 1905, I met Leland Buxton in the Lobby of the House of Commons, and, in ten minutes' conversation, we decided that we would try to reach Sanaa, the capital of the ancient Arabia Felix and of the modern province of Yemen. One often meets friends in the Lobby of the House, but it is a rare thing to make friends in that inconsequent and passionate spot ; I little knew my luck in that encounter.

Other places had their attraction, but at that date hardly any Englishmen had been to Sanaa, and it still had the mystery, if not the glory, that belonged to it when the Queen of Sheba held her court upon its mountains. We recognised that our chances of getting there were slight, for the Arabs were making fierce war upon the Turks, who were fighting a losing campaign, and we could look for no help from the Foreign Office ; but we thought that the attempt was worth making.

We met again in Cairo, in the full glare of Egyptian August. Buxton had just come from fighting the Turks in Macedonia, with Bulgarian bands, and had not more than a few months to dispose of, so we made our plans quickly. I said good-bye to my old friend and host, Percy Machell, who was then Adviser to the Minister of the Interior in Egypt, and we set sail on a Greek boat.

To some travellers—and I am one of them—the fascination of the Red Sea is compensation for its

wicked soul. The hurrying steamship or the drifting dhow seems itself part of the stationary panorama. From the mirages of Suez to the blinding whiteness of the salt-works of Aden there is nothing that is ordinary ; the grim islands of the Twelve Apostles (of what gospel can they have been the apostles but the wrecking of slave-ships and the death of men by thirst) stand sterile and forbidding ; savage mountains surround the desert that is still the home of the Knights of Araby. When darkness has left the sea, a fairy dawn may show the impeccable Island of Kamaran, with all its hygienic properties, where English exiles wash, sterilise, and are forgotten ; or beyond Kamaran the tiny island of Perim, between the Gate of Tears—the British link between Asia and Africa.

Ours was a dilatory journey, with a curious night spent at Jeddah. It was uncomfortable and sweltering, but we made the acquaintance of a nomadic tall-talking Englishman, who had spent much time on the Red Sea Coast. Later, I wrote this doggerel version of his own story :

#### BY JEDDAH TOWN

There were ten Arabs in the plain, who met him with his guide ;  
The sheikh of them rode forward then, to talk at eventide.  
He said, " The desert is a place where rarely strangers thrive ;  
Give up your horse, give up your gun, and go you home alive."

He answered to the Arab sheikh, " Peace on you and your kin,  
But I shall give my horse to-night to ostlers at the inn.  
My race is not a humble folk whom such as you bid walk ;  
Have you no powder with your ten that one comes out to talk ? "

Then silence fell between the two. The Arab pulled his rein,  
Then, " Here's the truth of El Hejaz, why should brave men be slain ?  
You have ten Beduw lances, four Beduw shots to fear " ;  
But gaily laughed the Englishman, " I have five bullets here."

" It's a full league to Jeddah town, the evening will be done  
Before you reach the tomb of Eve and the Turkish garrison ;  
Resign yourself to Allah's will, and see to-morrow's sun,  
And go in peace ; you cannot fight, for we are ten to one."

They shot at him against the light, and twice they missed him wide,  
When swiftly up behind him came Mahmoud, his desert guide.  
He shot his guide, and still he had four bullets that he stored,  
And when his horse fell, wounded, three. He would not use his sword.

They followed him as kites that mark a stag that has to die ;  
Unflinching he held his way, his gallant head was high.  
Eleven fighters crossed the sand, their shadows grew apace,  
While ten of them were taught the truth about his English race.

They had but one shot still to fire. The world was very still,  
And safety shone from Eve's white tomb, that shone a tiny hill.  
Their last shot failed, and he went on content that he had won,  
And glad to see the glory of the blood-red setting sun.

The desert is a cruel place, where strangers rarely thrive.  
He shot his horse, he shot his guide, but he walked home alive.

We crossed over to Massowah, where smuggled pearls were pressed upon us, at a price. We had calm and rough weather ; the Red Sea in August was like itself, and so was the Greek cooking-oil. Finally we landed from a wilderness of yellow waters into the confusion of Hodeidah. We had had trouble on the Red Sea, now we were to have trouble on the red land. It began at once in the Custom House, where the officials tried to take my typewriter from me. An indescribable scrimmage followed, and the rumour of our coming went all about the town. The British Consul, Mr. Richardson, was away on leave, and a German Jew, F., who had some shadowy connection with the Consulate, pressed his hospitality upon us. We accepted, reluctantly. F. was an unpleasant man at first sight, and more unpleasant when one knew him better. He was in Hodeidah to make money and to make it quickly ; he was callous in his methods with the natives, and in the ways in which he brought pressure to bear upon them through the authorities. He had a subordinate, whom he bullied, a young German clerk from Hamburg, who recited Heine in his sleep, and whose only amusement was to play



puff-dart in the day. We lived in an enormous house, packed with merchandise. In the daytime we remained in the lower rooms for coolness, and at night slept upon the vast flat roof, where our slumbers were disturbed by locusts and a black woman, F.'s house-keeper, who screamed like an hysterical peacock.

After our treatment on arrival we did not wish to show too great eagerness to call upon the authorities, and dawdled round the city and its sights.

Hodeidah is a town of tall grey walls of madrepora, with latticed windows and lines of wattled huts, cut by sandy paths, where the bare feet of hurrying natives make no sound. Near the centre of the town an unfortunate man was chained to the ground. We protested that his chain should be taken from him, and were told that he cared for it more than anything on earth. He had been tied to that one spot for forty years. The crime for which he suffered was forgotten; the punishment, if punishment it could still be called, remained in force. Now, however, the poor man was bereft of his wits, and had become almost a saint, as well as a spectacle. A few planks had been erected between him and the tribulation of the sun, and well-cooked meals were served to him. I saw his daughter-in-law and his relations eat these, and take many offerings on his behalf.

On the quay at Hodeidah lay the greater part of the medical stores that should have gone to the Turkish troops at Sanaa, perishing there in the furnace of the open air. In the bazaars were Hebrew, Greek, Arab and Indian merchants. The volume of trade was large, but the Turk was unrepresented.

Buxton and I agreed that there was no other nation which, holding a province as rich as this, would sit thus impassive while the alien gathered the profits, and that this lethargy prophesied the failure of Turkish rule in the Yemen. We could not then foresee the

great war, and the pro-Turkish and anti-British part that the Yemen was to play.

After we had waited twenty-four restless hours, we went to pay our respects to the Mutesarrif of Hodeidah. We found a courteous, rather dreamy old gentleman, with a Stamboul Turk, who had no love for foreigners, as his second-in-command. I spoke in French, and said, with some shame, that Buxton and I were rich and noble Englishmen, and that we were going to shoot in India. "Nous allons faire la chasse aux tigres." "Et lions," said Buxton, who was anxious to develop the picture in detail. The Mutesarrif, awaking from a dream, said that there were no lions in India, and that that part of our journey must be purposeless. I brushed this argument aside as irrelevant, and said that we proposed, en route, to visit Sanaa, of whose beauty we had heard much. A long conversation in Turkish followed between the Mutesarrif and the Stamboul Turk, the upshot of which was that neither Ahmed Feizi, Commander-in-Chief in the Yemen, nor the Sublime Porte, would be willing to let us travel to Sanaa. The Mutesarrif was inclined to like and to trust us; not so the second-in-command, his evil genius. In a lowered voice he used the word "Sudan" again and again, and dissented audibly to our going; for at that time England's enemies in Turkey had spread the story that the English had supported and fomented the rebellion in the Yemen, through their Moslem friends in the Sudan. I was aware of this, and was eager to deny it, but I did not answer in Turkish, and implied by silence that I did not understand.

It was obvious that the Mutesarrif did not wish to return us a definite negative. He promised that in course of time the escort should be provided. Buxton and I walked out, doubting if we should ever see Sanaa. I went from the heat of the sanded streets

to drink coffee in the bazaar, where, as dusk fell, a Greek spoke to me when he thought he was unobserved. He had been present at our interview with the Mutesarrif, and he confirmed what I believed: the Turks would temporise, wear out our patience, and at last invent some insuperable obstacle to our journey. We ignored these unpropitious probabilities, and proceeded to make our arrangements. The Greeks procured a muleteer. We hired mules for ourselves and for a native servant, whom the interpreter was to find. We then sent word to the Mutesarrif that our arrangements were complete and that we proposed starting the following day. When dawn broke, Buxton and I were ready for the journey, but there was no Greek, no muleteer, no escort—nothing but the heat.

We waited in that torrid street for three hours. I then went to see the Mutesarrif, trudging over deep, hot sand. He sent a message to say that his sickness and other accidents had prevented his perfecting the arrangements for our journey. That evening, the Greek met me again in the bazaar. He told me that the Turks had beaten our muleteer, and had threatened him with worse punishment if he brought us mules. This Greek was very willing; he had not a mercenary soul. It was meat and drink to him to rub shoulders with two men of the race that had helped to redeem Greece and might help his country again. †The past glory of Athens was his heritage, and the future possession of Constantinople was the hope of this poor grocer-interpreter. He swelled with pride while he served us.

Next day we undertook another pilgrimage to the Mutesarrif. He regretted, in broken French, that he had not been able to arrange for our departure. He thought we were very lucky to have escaped the heat of yesterday, and hoped that we should leave for Sanaa within twenty-four hours. His evil genius

said to him, in Turkish, that it was obvious that we were up to no good and that we had better be told that the business was impossible. The Governor shook his head. Once again, within twenty-four hours, we failed to leave. The second-in-command had had his way. This time the muleteer arrived, but the escort was insufficient and insubordinate. It refused to come itself or to allow us to go. At this point we went, almost as hot as the day, to the Mutesarrif.

My wrath had been laid down and bottled for some time. At Buxton's instigation, I had pretended to have no knowledge of Turkish, and it was exasperating, in the prickly heat of the summer, to watch these tricks being played upon us as if we were children. When we found the Mutesarrif, I broke into ungrammatical, but vehement, Turkish. I said that it was a reproach to me to have to speak to him in uneducated Turkish, but it was a greater reproach to him to have deceived Buxton and myself as he had done. Such was not the behaviour of men of honour. Gentlemen did not force their company where it was not wanted. If he had spoken plainly, we would have gone upon our way to India. Methods such as these produced a most painful impression. There must be something very wrong at Sanaa for such pains to be taken to prevent us from going there.

The Mutesarrif was taken aback at this unexpected flood of Turkish. He said that he had been misunderstood, that these delays were not his fault, and that he made himself personally responsible for our departure at dawn the following day. We believed him. The atmosphere suddenly changed, and became very friendly while we drank coffee and smoked. When he bade us good-bye, "Go quickly and quickly come again," he said. "You must not keep those tigers waiting. We have recommended you to God."

We began the day of our departure at 4 a.m. with unending journeys between military headquarters and the headquarters of the mules and the Serai. The heat, even at that early hour, seemed to us disgraceful, and we left, finally, very late, at 9 a.m., with an escort of 150 men. We marched with changes of escorts and mounts, all that day and all that night, and all the next day and the best part of the next night, until our senses failed us from weariness. At the end of this forty hours' march, we had three hours' sleep. The Turkish captain, Buxton and I were shown into a reeking hole, where three infected straw trestles huddled together. These we dragged outside from the living smell, and stretching ourselves upon them, we fell into instant and complete sleep. A moment passed, and all the sky flamed with lightning; a flashing waterfall of rain drenched us to the skin. We woke and groaned and turned and slept.

On the way we had paused at Bajil, where the heat and the flies had prevented my sleeping and, with an escort, I had gone round the town, a mean and miserable place. The people were unfriendly; the women, picturesque and pretty, wore the sugar-loaf hats of mediæval witches, and under this hat a red or other bright-coloured handkerchief. The Kaimakan, a Circassian, said that it was waste of time to think about clothes, when there were great problems of irrigation to be settled. An Anatolian corporal there won my admiration and affection. He spoke of their life; the high, forbidding mountains, and the poison of the heat-infested plain.

We then rode on, first through the low-lying Tehemah, with its ever-shifting sand, and often as we rode sleep came so close that the Arabs on their camels seemed shadows as they passed. Then we began to climb the uplands. An enormous moon shone out upon clouds of an almost insufferable brilliance, and

like the Israelites, we were led by a column of silver fire. It was on this ride that I first made the intimate acquaintance of the Turkish soldier ; it was later I became his friend. Generally speaking, he had been exiled from his own country from three to ten years, and sometimes for even longer ; he was paid the regal sum of four francs a month ; he had campaigns behind him and campaigns before him, a very precarious reward in victory, almost certain death in defeat. Beside the elusive Arab, who took a hundred grinning shapes, he had to fight the poisonous desert heat of the lowlands and the fierce cold of the high mountains with the same equipment, and through it all he lavished praise upon the goodness of Providence and upon the mercy of his own wise Government. Buxton changed his opinion ; we agreed the Turkish private soldier was an heroic figure.

When we left Hodeidah it was Ramadan, and though our escort were legally absolved from the duty of practising that rigid fast, they neither smoked nor ate nor drank until the evening hour. Even then they offered us their brackish water and their few olives before they drank or broke their long fast. No complaint ever passed the lips of a Turkish soldier, only the long sigh of nostalgia. Protesting less than the camels, their tired feet plodded through the sand that rose in columned dust to parch their mouths and blind their eyes. We walked with them, but we had our mounts when we wished to ride. Once my mule went lame, and I asked that it should be sent back with a soldier who was not fit to march. "Allah, Allah, what is this ?" said an old and wizened sergeant-major from Anatolia, "such talk is not for the Yemen. You ask Faris Maris (FitzMaurice) ; he knows. Here men and animals, sound or lame, go on because they must. What is thy beast ? A mule. What is that man ? A private soldier. Mount, lord. Hurry, you rascals," he shouted.

The Albanians spoke unceasingly of the beauty and the coolness of their own land, and their loathing of the desert and their hatred of the sand, and later I wrote these verses :

#### THE ALBANIAN IN THE YEMEN

Camels know their place for kneeling, and the pigeon knows her tree,  
But the Yemen sands are burning, and the desert winds hate me ;  
I have no rest from marching till the coolness of the shade  
Of the cypresses of Prisrend, when my debt of hate is paid.

There are vultures in the Yemen, not the eagles of my land ;  
There are red flowers in the Yemen, but at home wild Lady's hand <sup>1</sup>  
Grows around my house at Prisrend where each year the same storks  
nest ;  
I would hear their wings a-clapping, when my friends and I take rest.

I would give the rest of lifetime ere I reach the Calm Abode <sup>2</sup>  
But to see the mountain faces that the racing firelight showed,  
And with friends to sit and finger the old pedlar's wares, Ferhan,  
Hear them call at dawn, and linger by the crimson erghawan.<sup>3</sup>

If I find my foe of Dibra, and I ever see his face,  
I have many friends in Prisrend, there'll be stones to mark the place.<sup>4</sup>  
So my spirit shall find quiet, with my head below white stones,  
When the melting snow has roused the Drin till all his water drones.

The white Drin and the black Drin, fierce brethren of a feud,  
They storm the savage winter, a gallant mountain brood ;  
But the challenge of their turmoil will be music dear to me,  
Who hate the tide of crawling sand and the sand-red sea.

The Syrian troops, men and officers, were inferior, though among them there were some exceptions. Occasionally native levies rode with us, and sometimes their physique was startling in its perfection. These Yemenite Arabs, with their eagle eyes, bronzed faces and oiled curls streaming in the wind as they galloped

<sup>1</sup> Lady's hand, Turkish name for honeysuckle.

<sup>2</sup> Ikhtihali-dar-i-baka, the Abode of Permanence.

<sup>3</sup> Erghawan, Judas trees.

<sup>4</sup> When a man is killed because of *jakh* (blood-feud) in Albania, they mark the place with white stones.

on their beautiful horses, lance in hand, might have been the finest of the Philistines that David fought.

Leaving the low-lying, fever-haunted land behind us, we rose swiftly into the mountains. We rode through one ascending valley that had all the delights of "Araby the Blest"; its enchanted air conquered the Turks and the English. We dawdled together and made friends. It was a wide gorge in the mountains, with the enticing grass of an English park, while a friendly sun shone through aromatic air. There were great trees and flowers everywhere, and bright-feathered birds flashed amongst the creepers that covered the cliffs, where sometimes a sparkling vein of mica shone like a cascade. And when we were half-way up this valley the Turks began firing at francolin with rifles and we with revolvers. Running through the scrub on the mountain side, I came upon a circle of skeletons of men who had fallen fighting. They were shrouded with flowers that gave their skulls a gay and macabre look, for blossoms were their eyes, and their mouths smiled in scarlet. Our escort constantly gathered and brought us mint, thyme, myrtle and orchids.

The feverish haste of the journey was over by common consent. Buxton made maps unmolested while the rest of us sat under the shadow of great trees. We apologised for the trouble we were giving. "It is our duty and our pleasure," was the answer of the escort. Once in this delectable valley, the men indulged in horseplay. We offered prizes. I asked the Syrian captain if he would let his sergeant wrestle with me. These two, a fine pair, came from the same village, and I had a great liking for both. "As you command," said he, "but . . ." The sergeant here spoke to his friend and captain. "On my head be it. I obey. But thou knowest that no man can stand against me. Remember Ibrahim, good, poor



man, and his ribs. Art not thou and I sent to protect these English lords (on whom be peace) against the wild Arabs? Will this purpose be served if we break the bones of our guest?" That wrestling match did not take place. I hope that Hassan Chaush, that Syrian Hercules, has survived the war, for when he could he used his strength gently.

At the base of this valley, the gorge was so narrow that an arch of rock spanned it. Beyond this, some Arabs sold us the first fresh water that we drank upon the road. A man was dying by the wayside. Buxton and I asked the Syrian captain if we could not give help with medicines. "Geberyor," said he—he is dying—but using the Turkish word that is only applied to animals. This was the first occasion that the Syrians' contempt for the Arab of the desert was made plain.

These were our stations on the road from Hodeidah :

Hodeidah to Bajil	.	.	.	.	30 miles.
Bajil to Hedjile	.	.	.	.	23 "
Hedjile to Menakha	.	.	.	.	19 "
Menakha to Suk el Khamis	.	.	.	.	23 "
Suk el Khamis to Sanaa	.	.	.	.	23 "

From Bajil onward the ruined country gave rich promise of agricultural possibilities, but the Arabs make no attempt to collect the water beyond making a few mud-banked pools, which serve the cattle with drink. *Dhurra* (maize) is the staff of life, and four crops are reaped annually in the Tehama. It makes a not unpleasant bread. Coffee and wild olives grow upon the higher slopes. Beyond Obel, the road becomes sombre, grand and terrible at night, splendid during the day. On the way, we occasionally caught a flash of a brook, but no river reaches the sea.

In the Yemen all things grow old quickly, especially buildings and women. At Ataré there stands what

appears to be an ancient Burj or tower, which looked a forlorn ruin of antiquity ; it was built only sixty years ago. Inside it smelt horribly. We went up to sleep on the roof, and found ourselves only a little below the silver beauty of the clouds ; below us the landscape was muffled in mist and moonlight ; but those who have climbed from the heat cannot afford to sleep in the clouds, so we passed the night in the foetid room that smelt like leprosy.

Next day in the dawn the white flowers and red-hot pokers which decorated every crevice lent the decrepit tower a fictitious air of youth and beauty. An ancient hag, more dreadful than the tower, whom no deception could beautify, brought us hot milk, and, when we paid her, kissed our boots. From Ataré to Menakha the escort was increased and the signs of war became plentiful. Some half of the Jews of Menakha had died of starvation during the war. This colony is as ancient as that of Sanaa, and under Arab rule it was refused permission to engage in agriculture, which the Turks had encouraged.

In Menakha we received the hospitality of Dimitri the Greek, who had lived there many years. We were half dead with fatigue, and his kindness revived us. A small Syrian lieutenant, commanding the escort, tried to steal his cognac in his absence, but we would not allow this abuse of Dimitri's hospitality.

When a Greek is kind he does not measure his hospitality. Dimitri was an uneducated man. He talked well, and with liking, of the Turks ; with toleration of the Arabs ; and he treated us like long-lost brothers. While he spoke, his head moved in rhythm to his words, and the tassel of his fez flew regularly to right and left. It mesmerised me, and I disgraced myself by first falling asleep in my chair and then by falling from it.

The town of Menakha stands upon a high ridge, one

side of which is cultivated while the other is barren, and the valleys round it are the habitation of baboons, of which we caught occasional glimpses.

On our journey the next day the Syrian lieutenant gave continual offence. He rode on a pile of cushions, as if he had stomach-ache. He was very small, and he beat fine, big soldiers who were sick. Buxton and I took away his whip, and made him walk when the road was very difficult for his beast. A cheery Lahz walked beside me, applauding all that we did.

From Menakha we rode to the highest point of our journey, Beit es Salaam, the House of Peace, a ruined and dismantled camp nine thousand feet above the sea, whose condition belied its name. We had come up dressed in tropical khaki, and now where we had to sleep we suddenly met piercing cold. I had always believed that fleas could not live at that height or in that atmosphere, but we spent a night of torture in bitter wind, and in sand that was infested with millions of fleas, the camp-followers alike of the Turk and the Arab armies.

But if the night was unhappy, the dawn was magnificent. The muleteer, Ahmed, was palsied in his limbs from cold, and inarticulate; he became a joke and buffoon to the hardier Turks. A great wind blew across the heights, and the country lay clear below, though its outlines were softened by lingering twilight, and when the sun rose the moon was still in the sky, luminous as a perfect moonstone. We travelled on, past ancient cisterns, down a slope to Sanaa.

We saw Sanaa; a grey and tragic town, with the savage memories of famine written upon it. There was silence along the decrepit mud walls, which in some places were forty feet high, while here and there they were level with the land. In the town itself the houses are tall and old. They are embroidered with white stucco, and ornamented with great doors

of wrought iron, heavily clamped. On the second or third story there are small balconies, and the air is full of the noise of buckets ascending and descending to and from them. It is a well-watered town, and from end to end of the city the constant song of the *ajale* (water-wheel) is heard in the morning, as the rope-held buckets crawl up the grey walls to a resting-place in a worked stone cage. The windows of the houses are circular and paned with thin slabs of pure alabaster, which give them a grey, shrouded, unwinking look. To the interior of these houses a cool and pleasant light comes through the alabaster windows. The roofs are flat.

At Sanaa we were entertained by Signor Caprotti, whose native home was Magenta, and from him we received that kindness that so many travellers have learnt to love in his countrymen. He had been a merchant there for many years; he wore the fez, knew Turkish and Arabic, and fearing neither race he was on terms of intimacy with both. He spoke frankly on all things, including Britain and her policy, to which he attributed a subtlety that left Buxton and myself amazed at an extraordinary intelligence which for our part we had entirely failed to notice in our official countrymen: he genuinely believed, for instance, that the Italian disasters in Abyssinia were a foreseen and calculated part of British political schemes. Such opinions made his kindness to two wandering Englishmen all the more remarkable. During the siege he did what one man could to mitigate the general suffering, and to the public charity of his table there came not only the Jews but Arab ladies of past reigning houses, thus proving by their broken pride the point which the famine had reached.

After losing Sanaa the Turks had had a hard fight to regain it, for the Arab position was extremely strong and the road over which the Turkish artillery

had to advance was often a mass of boulders ; it seemed incredible to us that the artillery should have succeeded in crossing the mountains. It was only two months before our arrival that the Turks had won back the town. Before its siege it had numbered some seventy thousand inhabitants ; when we were there the entire population was estimated at twenty thousand. The Turkish garrison had numbered eleven thousand ; nine thousand had perished from starvation. This siege had been worthy of an honourable place in military history, yet so sensitive was the Turkish Government with regard to its own reputation, and so firmly did it believe that the censor's suppression of reports concealed trouble, that not a word had yet been published with regard to the magnificent resistance of the Ottoman troops before Buxton and I arrived at Sanaa.

The famine had fallen like a hammer on the Jews. It was visible in their faces and in their homes. The Semitic quarter of Sanaa, though less ornamented, is as picturesque as any other part of the town. It has probably hardly changed since the days when Ezra demanded and, so says history, was refused a contribution from his co-religionists of Uzal (as Sanaa was then called) for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. Though the women's shawls now come from India instead of Nineveh or Babylon, the graceful dress is the same. The Jews are the most inquisitive of the inhabitants of Sanaa. When we appeared and gave some small charity, a crowd followed us greater than ever the Pied Piper drew after him, asking piteously for alms, and inquiring why we came and about our families. Their need could not be exaggerated ; famine stared at us. These Jews are obviously a town-bred people, small, narrow-chested, with olive complexions and high foreheads, and tapering artistic fingers ; their eyes are bright but timid,

and their speech tentative and shy. They are cleaner than the Arabs, and formerly they were fairly well off and they could afford splendid dresses ; now there was little that was splendid, though the small industries by which they live had begun again, scantily, to provide bread. We were shown fine gala dresses, worn chiefly by the women, with scarlet shawls, embroidered trousers and leggings of gold and silver. Their hoods have as many colours as the coat of Joseph, and the headgear of the children is adorned with every coin, from the Maria Teresa dollar, and the golden ducats of a Venetian doge to the half-rupee of India, and these are gathered in regular patterns, clustering round silver horses or other fantastic objects sewn into the cloth ; while their eyes are hidden by a silver fringe. I believe that this is the only Jewish community who do not practise usury, with the exception of some parts of Transylvania, where the Hebrews also live largely by agriculture.

Statistics are not an exact science in Mohammedan countries, but the greater exactitude of the Jews had enabled them to estimate more nearly their own losses. In Menakha from seventeen hundred to two thousand had died, that is about half the Jewish population, while of the eight thousand who lived in Sanaa in 1904, a year later barely two thousand survived.

During the siege entire families died stolidly in the street, or turning their faces to the wall in their own houses, for it was little use begging when bread was sold at thirty shillings the pound. Money, it was true, had been sent from Constantinople, but only £2,000—a sum totally inadequate to the need of seventy thousand starving people—was ever disbursed. Though the city was not put to fire and sword by the Arabs or the Turks, it was only a dejected memory

of its former self, for the remaining inhabitants had used, and were using, as fuel, the wood of those houses whose owners had died.

The Ghetto of Sanaa was like the dream of some haunted painter. Many of the men were still skin and bone, and the crowd of dark faces with cavernous cheeks, half-hidden by twisted, black elf-locks that hung on either side, begging eyes and clutching hands, were horrible.

On the way to this quarter we went into a couple of rooms called schools. There the teacher faced a class of some dozen emaciated children, who all read the Pentateuch together at the top of their voices, from a book printed in three different languages—Aramaic, Hebrew and Arabic—sometimes in alternate paragraphs and sometimes in alternate words. It was pandemonium to the ear. The teacher selfishly placed the book upon his knees, facing him; so that the children were forced to read their trinity of language upside down. I thought this one of the most remarkable lessons I had ever seen.

The houses here were different from those in other quarters of the town. Instead of having a brick or stone foundation most were built entirely of mud, with a terrace on which higher rooms looked down, and on which the family took the cool of the evening. The rooms were scrupulously clean, and we passed a couple of pleasant hours talking and buying silver ware, inconvenienced only by the habit which courtesy imposes on strangers, though the natives enjoy it, of drinking masses of a brown liquid, which is obtained by boiling the husks of coffee. Any cessation of this pastime was greeted with loud cries, the Hebrew equivalent of "Joseph, the gentleman's glass is empty," and instantly a flood of tepid brown water was poured into our cups from the huge metal bottle that rested in the ashes of a brazier.

The Jews in those days were subject to the same tax which rayahs (subject races) pay all over the Ottoman Empire. It was to the credit of the Turks that this year the poll tax, which varied from £1. 3s. to 2s., had been remitted, since this tribute had already been levied by the Imam Yahia, the Chief of the Arabs, whose servants also in many cases received a bribe to protect the remnant of this hapless people.

Nowhere is the religious tenacity of the Jew shown more emphatically than in the Yemen. In Europe during the Middle Ages he suffered persecution for his creed willingly or unwillingly. It was virtually impossible for him—a man marked in dress, in feature and in trade, whose house or quarter was practically his prison—to escape the hostility of his neighbours. It was his destiny and his sentence to remain apart, an Ishmael incarcerated in a slum, driven by persecution to retaliate. But in Arabia his power of amalgamation with the tribes that surrounded him has depended and depends simply upon his own desire to be assimilated ; the language, clothes and customs of the country are as native to him as they are to the Arabs, yet because he refuses to abandon his own religion he is invariably the victim of the latest conqueror, Osmanli or Arab.

On the whole the Jews unquestionably preferred Turkish to Arab rule. The Ottoman may perhaps ask more, but then he is more generous than the Arab. A Turkish officer described the entry of the relieving force and how the Jewish women danced and cried Allelujah as the Turks marched into Sanaa ; only the cymbals were wanting to complete the likeness to the Old Testament picture, as the girls danced before their deliverers.

The Jews of Sanaa are a harmless, peaceful people, and they have never been accused of the crimes of their brethren in other lands. Here they have always



lived quietly, never rising to prominence or acquiring the name of usurers, but paying their taxes, which in the old days went to support the prisoners of war, with greater regularity than their neighbours. Of the synagogues, which number thirty-two, all but four are closed for lack of worshippers.

Sanaa in the tropics is a pleasant, cool city in the daytime, but even more pleasant at night, when from the terrace of the house the flicker of the summer lightning is visible like a continuous pulse of light, lending a glow to the moonlight and showing the outlines of the hills which encircle the city.

For a place with such a stormy reputation it had a quiet atmosphere, and on Fridays especially, except for the cry of the muezzins, only the animal life, vultures, carrion crows and hawks (for the scavenger dogs had all been eaten) contributed any noise. It was a silent city.

The gates of Sanaa have little merit. They are mostly modern and mostly ugly, each watched over by a Turkish guard-house. Their number is six—Bab es Satranj, the Gate of Chess; Bab el Yahud, the Jews' Gate; Bab es Sabah, the Gate of the Morning; Bab el Balagak; Bab el Yemen; Bab el Roumi, the Gate of the Romans, which rightly faces the north.

Many of the mosques are beautiful as well as old; but of the sixty-eight which are in the town, a foreigner was permitted to enter only the two that were exclusively Turkish, and those not without difficulty.

The Yemen has never been prospected, and, like all unknown lands, is said to be very rich in minerals. Time will tell. Unusual stones, with curious colours and pictures in them, are found near Sanaa. Their intrinsic value is small, but their beauty and their quaintness are great. As the frost paints ferns and flowers on the window-panes, so these stones, white, blue or red, hold pictures of an infinite variety of

colour and design. Some have sunset clouds painted in them; others, like moonstones, hold the likeness of a mirage desert city; while one I saw showed a mountain covered with a forest, which a fire was gradually consuming. In others one can see, sometimes clearly, sometimes dimly, a boat sailing at sunset or what seems a fight between birds in the air, or again, and most usually, simply ferns and trees. The Mecca stone, which in reality comes from Sanaa, is well known, and has a certain value at Stamboul, but though the other kinds are exported to Turkey, I have never seen them in the bazaars.

The soil is amazingly fertile. Round Sanaa itself the water is at a certain depth, but wells for the purpose of irrigation were everywhere abundant. Barley is reaped four times, and wheat thrice, during the year; though on the tableland only one to two crops of *dhurra* (maize) are taken, in the plain it is cut four times from the same stalk, naturally deteriorating in quality with each harvest. At many places near Sanaa, as at Gajaran, water is found three to five feet from the surface of the land. The Arabs believed in a system of subterranean rivers, which formed lakes, but never reached the sea. Outside the city a manure, partly composed of cinders, was used. Its powers of fertilisation were said to be very great, but it was not employed in the country generally. We walked round the gardens near the town, and were able to realise what their beauty must be in the spring, with the brilliant white of peach and apricot, and the softer pink of the almond flowers. The gardens were extremely well tended, and gave proof of an attentive gardening very different from the rough methods we had seen while coming up the mountains.

The Arabs were supposed to pay a tithe annually on the land which they held—one to two piastres<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A piastre equalled 2*d.*

on a sheep, and four or six upon a cow ; but it frequently happened that by one method or another the ingenious taxpayer avoided contributing to the State for several years. Whenever the indignant Turks at last awoke to the situation, they swooped down and took all they could get. The Arab then felt himself injured, particularly if the year was a bad one, since he had not only to pay a sum that seemed excessive, but probably to expend part of his patrimony in bribes to remit his punishment, and he cried, as the peasant in the song to Trallebaston :

Quarante sous por ma ransoun,  
Et le Viconte viens pour sa gueardouns,  
Qu'ils ne me prenent en parfonde prisoun,  
Or Agardez Seigneurs, es-ce raisoun ?

Much has been said of Turkish oppression in the Yemen, but it must be remembered that the lower officials who assess and gather the taxes are themselves usually Arabs, and hold a very different position from the *evvetjis*,<sup>1</sup> as the Christian *Muavins* (minor officials) of Europe are contemptuously called. The *evvetji* has to do what he is told ; but one Moslem Arab official can bring weight to bear on the Porte.

The Yemen was then governed from the Yemen. The Sultan had at last acquiesced in the existence of a strong man, Ahmed Feizi Pasha. He was an old man, but there seemed to be hope for the province, as the Porte had chosen a successor of the same type, and had agreed to allow the Yemen to continue to be governed on present lines.

The history of the Yemen for many years had been the history of revolt. The flower of the Turkish troops had withered beneath the heat of the land and the unceasing attacks of the Arabs. There was but one road to Sanaa, and it had been easy to cut this solitary

<sup>1</sup> *Evvet ji*—" Yes, sir,"

line of communication. Thus in 1905 Sanaa had fallen, to be relieved later on by Ahmed Feizi Pasha, a man who certainly deserved well of his country. Years had mellowed his judgment and he took a broader view than most Turkish Generals. He was in favour of amnesty and reconciliation, and he had gained his way. While we were in Sanaa, he was outside directing operations, and sometimes negotiating with Imam Yahia, the Pope-King of Arabia Felix.<sup>1</sup> Of the latter we were not able to learn much. It was said by the Turks, perhaps in a natural disparagement, that the chief credit of the Arab campaign belonged to his commander-in-chief, Seyf-ul-Islam.

Mahmud Nedim Bey, Temporary Governor of Sanaa, received us. He spoke quite frankly, saying that had Ahmed Feizi Pasha known that we were going to Sanaa he would certainly have prevented our journey, but that now that we had arrived he would desire us to be treated with courtesy; he would desire not less earnestly that we should return as speedily as possible. No permission would be granted for us to travel to Aden, as we proposed, but every consideration would be shown to us at Sanaa and on our return journey to Hodeidah. We went delicately into the grievances of the Yemen. He answered with great candour: the Yemen had been mishandled—so many Turkish provinces had been mishandled; a cow to give good milk must have good pasture—province after province had been farmed regardless of its power to pay; on the other hand, the local

<sup>1</sup> In the Great War, Imam Yahia, the inveterate enemy of the Turks, proved to be one of their strongest supporters. In 1916 *en route* to Mesopotamia the Governor of Aden took me to see the Turkish prisoners. Their lot was not a happy one, for they had exchanged a cruel and a dangerous exile for an exasperating imprisonment. They took the hammer-strokes of fate philosophically. They blessed the Sultan, and praised the Imam Yahia, "though perhaps it had been better if His Excellency had not fought the English."

population of the Yemen must accept its own share of responsibility. He called them a turbulent lot, hunting grievances as greyhounds hunted hares, but their qualities were fine. The majority of the officials in the Yemen were themselves Arabs. It was they who imposed the taxation. When the taxes were not collected for a number of years and heavy penalties subsequently fell upon the defaulters, it was these officials who were at least partly to blame. He earnestly hoped for an improvement in the condition of things. Egypt had shown the way. There was and could be no complete unity of the Arab race.

I thought Mahmud Nedim a frank man, with good intentions and a strong character. It required unusual courage on the part of any man occupying his prominent position in the Government of the Yemen to speak with his openness to unwelcome strangers, and possible impostors, like Buxton and myself.

We said good-bye to Signor Caprotti and to a number of Turks who had been kind to us, and took the road to Hodeidah, down the same great gorge up which the Turkish artillery had travelled at amazing speed. The route in places was like a road made by an egotistic torrent—a path worn through the mountains only for its own use. On our return journey, the fertility of the country impressed us even more. Much of the cultivation had fallen into ruin, but the mountain sides were terraced in wide sweeps, as an Arab said to me, like an eagle's wing.

We had an easier return journey. The Turks welcomed us as friends. "Ah, mad-blooded ones, well met! Pleasant is your coming. We are here because we serve the Sultan, you because of your desire come to this land where men perish. Strange is desire."

At Bajil we were treated with discourtesy by the

commandant, and in haste to get away I drank from an infected well, which had disastrous consequences, for later I developed virulent typhoid. At Hodeidah we again stayed with the German Jew who had first put us up on our arrival. With every desire to be grateful we found it very hard to entertain warm feelings towards our host, whose manners to the natives were execrable. We went to say good-bye to the old Governor, whose wife had just died. We thanked him for the great kindness shown us, expressed our admiration for the endurance and the valour of the Turkish troops, and apologised for having added to their burdens. The old man woke from a reverie, and smiled upon us. "It is very good to be young," he said. I said I had heard he had been ill and that we were very sorry for his sickness. "I have just lost my wife," he said. "Behold, that is my sickness," and put his hand across his eyes.

Those were the days when the majority of our countrymen were full of imperialist ambitions, and I confess I left the Yemen looking forward to the day when it should be controlled and its extraordinary resources should be developed by Great Britain, when a British railway should run from Hodeidah to Sanaa and from Sanaa to Aden. I suppose in 1905, with our record in India and Egypt, our name stood highest in the world for justice and for administration. We ruled other people discreetly, we administered fairly; we interfered only when we had to interfere, in cases of cruelty or gross injustice; we did not kick and we did not cajole; we developed without exploiting, and a backward nation could look forward to the amenities of life and self-respect under British tutelage. Buxton's views, in spite of the traditional liberalism of his family, agreed with mine. We had, however, a hot quarrel on another question at Aden. I was invited to go up-country by the Deputy Governor

and make an arrangement with a hostile chief. I took the view that Leland Buxton was too young to go upon this expedition. He indignantly resented my attitude, in just phrases that made me angry. The episode closed happily, when the Government of Bombay refused to agree to either of us going on this Imperial mission.

When we had made up our difference Leland Buxton and I decided to go down the Persian Gulf with a view to crossing Arabia, and for this enterprise we engaged an Arab boy as servant, called Abu Salaam, the Father of Peace. I told him that our ways would be adventurous and that we should go into perilous seas. "Wallah," he said, "a man can die but once. I come." Yet when any shadow of an opportunity arose of acting upon this stoicism he could not have shown more desire to avoid his end than if that end had been the death of a thousand cuts.

We left Aden for Bombay at the first opportunity by a French ship. That afternoon my head felt like a globe of coke. The French doctor visited me in my bunk, and my last conscious memory was hearing him prattle of the fertility of his garden in Corsica and the persimmons that it could produce.

The Arab servant, Abu Salaam, proved to be an Amalekite of the worst kind. He was a son of the inimical sand. He tasted all Leland's medicines and he wore my underclothes.

When we arrived at Bombay a frantic desire to get away from that French steamer gave me some vigour. Leaving Leland with the Father of Peace to bring the luggage on, I was helped on to a shore boat before the other passengers by the French authorities, who were only too anxious to get rid of a doubtful invalid. Once again the world ceased to interest me, and during this interval I was taken up as a speculation by an enterprising Parsee, who drove me to the

doors of the General Hospital. Through a dream I heard him reciting imaginary titles of mine. To these the English doctors paid little attention. I had unfortunately forgotten to bring my purse and credentials. I was assigned a bed in a long ward, where presently Leland found me. Lord Lamington, Governor of Bombay, was later a friend of mine, but at that time neither Leland nor I had any acquaintance in Bombay, and he too passed a dreary time while I was recovering, until I persuaded him to go to the Taj Mahal.

My recollection of the hospital in Bombay is of an enormous ward inhabited by sick men of all sorts. Next to me was a Chinese seaman; on the other side and facing me was a dying Japanese. Some of the doctors were very kind; others incurious and dictatorial. The matron could not do enough for any case, but a number of the nurses were interested chiefly in discipline, the height of the sheet and the submissiveness with which the patient met the ordeal of continual face-washing. With these unfriendly doctors and nurses, one felt like a dull object-lesson or a stupid recruit. Noise and movement go with the memory of that ward. I can never think of it without an accompaniment of the banging and rattling of its windows whenever the hot wind blew; that gusty noise nagged without ceasing. My soul wearied of the hospital. The Father of Peace, for once in his life, played up. He put a screen about my bed, and brought my clothes to me. One quiet morning with his help I dressed and sallied forth, unnoticed. I took a languid seat in a "gharry" and drove to the Hotel Taj Mahal with premature jubilation; in a short time I wished myself back at the hospital.

The Taj Mahal Hotel seemed to me like the description of the king's daughter in the Bible, "all glorious within"—fine to describe but unsatisfactory as everyday raiment. It was delightful again to have



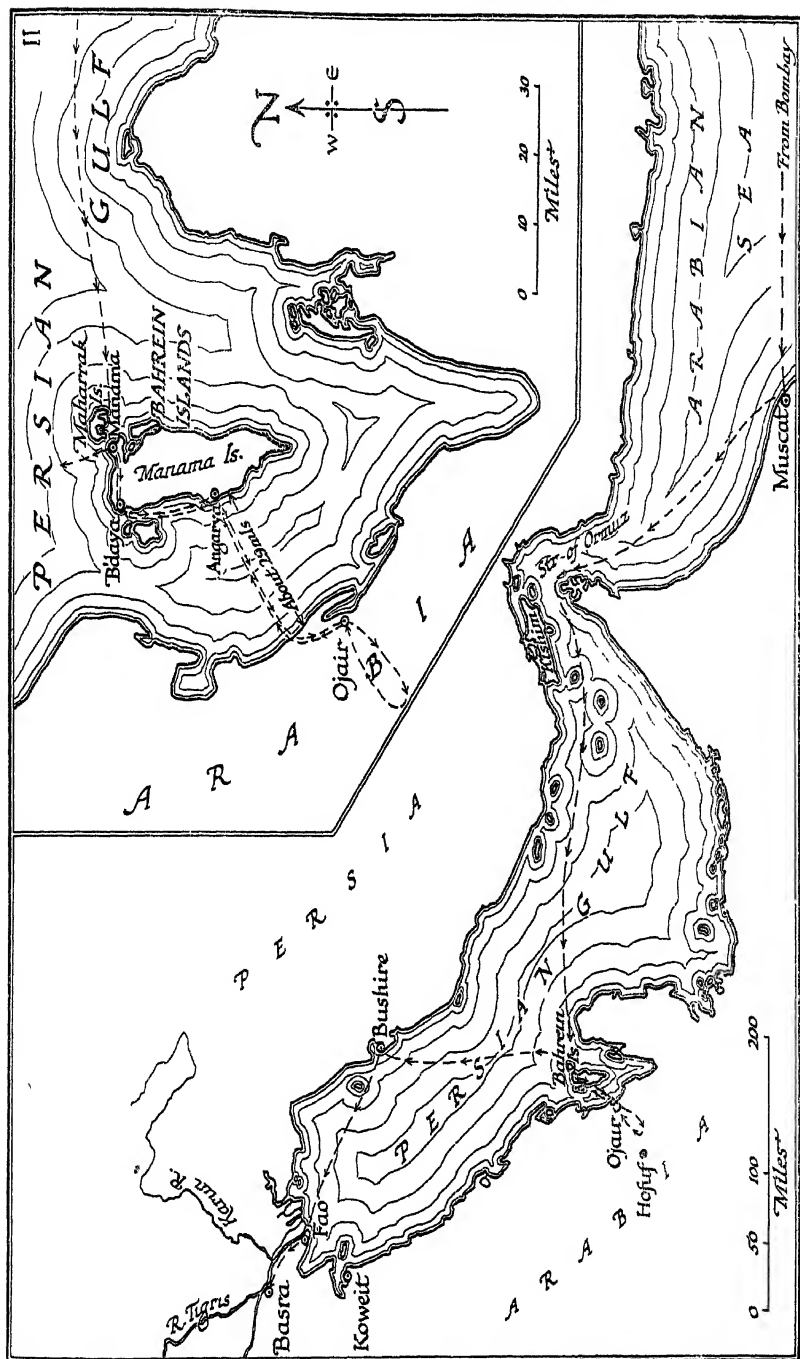
a room to oneself and no stricken foreigner dying near one, and I liked the colouring of the hotel, but the service was intolerable. Abu Salaam spent his days elsewhere in the pursuit of pleasure. I could only get at the bells with difficulty and they were rarely answered, and when they were the attendants appeared, smiled and disappeared completely. The chief doctor of the hospital was friendly and forgiving, and visited me. He told me that I had had a dangerous attack of typhoid and that I had not been looked after on the French boat; he advised returning to England as soon as I was well. I, however, became convinced that the Persian Gulf, at that time of the year, offered admirable qualifications for recuperation, and soon after arriving in Bombay, weary beyond words of the ministrations of Abu Salaam, I had telegraphed to Riza, telling him to join me in Bombay. No answer had come. When Leland returned, he and I took tickets, on s.s. *Africa*, of the British India line.

The passengers on board were few: a naturalised German, Wolff, who had ruffled it up and down the Gulf for years, though still a young man, and an American millionaire and his wife from Philadelphia. During the voyage I remained in bed, except for a casual hour when the sun shone on deck. On Christmas Eve while we were sitting at table, the cabin was suddenly filled with ghastly cries, like those of a dumb man in pain. One of the Lascars had gone overboard. He was said to have caught a ship's lifebelt, but when this was picked up a few minutes later there was no one on it. A shark had probably taken him.

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**PART III**  
**PERSIAN GULF**  
**MESOPOTAMIA**  
**RIZA**  
**DAMASCUS**







## PART III

### THE PERSIAN GULF

ON Christmas Day we landed at Muscat, and were the guests of Major Grey, the Consul, a brilliant linguist, who talked dialects as well as languages. He told me many stories; this one pleased me greatly.

He had found a Persian and his family sleeping outside the Consulate, and asking what he was doing there, the Persian answered that he was resting under the shadow of the British Flag, for there only was righteousness found. This was his piteous story: he had been thrown into prison on the charge of speaking irreverently of the Lieut.-Governor of Bunder Abbas, to whom he had paid 500 tomans as a bribe besides being fined another 500 for his offence. Then the Governor-General arrived. The Lieut.-Governor said to the persecuted Persian: "This is a most unfortunate business. Your case will now have to be tried again by the Governor-General, who is not a good man, but if you will give me 500 tomans I will see what I can do." The unhappy prisoner complied, but was horrified at being fined another 500 tomans by the Governor-General. Misfortune, however, had sharpened his wits, and he entered into relations with the servant of the Governor-General, to whom he paid 100 tomans, which procured an interview for him. The Governor-General was very reasonable, and said: "It is important for you that you escape from the clutches of this devil the Lieut.-Governor";

and the Persian agreed that it was indeed supremely important for him. On bestowing a gift, he was smuggled on board the *Persepolis*, a Persian gun-boat which at that time was the Persian Navy. The next morning the two Governors came aboard together, and both caught sight of their client and their victim.

"What!" said the Lieut.-Governor, "have you got that man here? He is the greatest rascal in Bunder Abbas."

"Ah, his face shows that," said the Governor-General.

The poor man had no further bribes to offer. He was bastinadoed and taken back to prison, where he remained until the fall of the Lieut.-Governor, when his star rose and he came to Muscat to take refuge under that part of the sky where the British Flag cast its shadow.

I shall not forget the first sight of Muscat; the brilliant winter sun and the white cliffs, with the names of the ships that had come into the port upon them, carved in deep shadow on white, or written in ebony on chalk. Some years later, in the war, I saw the name of the tiny Embassy yacht, the *Imogen*, from Constantinople, painted defiantly upon the cliffs of Muscat, dear and gallant dancer amongst the ranks of pugilists and tramps.

For some forgotten reason Leland Buxton and I had taken our only money, an enormous bag of Maria Teresa dollars, ashore with us. We probably thought that the Father of Peace might make off with it into the interior of Arabia, for at that time we had no knowledge of his unmitigated cowardice. These enormous Maria Teresa coins were then the chief currency in Arabia, and their weight was portentous. It put theft upon any large scale out of the question, for robbery became a matter of physical endurance, without serious profit. We returned early to the ship, and I settled down again to convalescence. It was

during these hours of rest that I determined to try to cross Arabia by landing at Ojair ; if possible starting from El Hasa.

As I said, our fellow-passengers were few and one of them was the adventurer I have already mentioned. He was about twenty-four, and, I believe, a German, though he claimed British nationality. He talked many languages, had traded, brawled and made love up and down the Gulf. He promised to help me. Later I lost faith in Wolff, as I will call him, but at the first he fired my imagination by his picturesque adventures. With Wolff there was a very handsome, martial young fellow, who was dressed half in native and half in European style. This youth passed as Hajji Ali, but he was said to be the son of a German. He had been on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, talked all local languages and could be Asiatic or European at will ; he was a fighter first, a doctor afterwards. So said Wolff—Hajji Ali said nothing, relying upon romantically good looks and aloofness. He may have been a doctor, but I imagined that his genius in medicine lay in the direction of selling love-philtres that Wolff recommended to the natives but did not take himself.

I spent my time of recuperation in the s.s. *Africa* in lamenting the lost opportunities of the British Empire, and in dreams of our possible recovery. As my health improved, my imperialism increased, and it seemed to me obvious that, since whatever peace there had been in the Persian Gulf had been due to our policy, we were entitled to the policeman's wage and the policeman's pension. The Persian Gulf had been a poor relation of the British Empire for a long time, and the agents of that poor relation, such as Cox, had done grand work. Their position required to be legitimised. Without this, they were sowing fruitful corn in a no-man's land.



We gave way to new and quite unsubstantial claims of Turk and Persian. We were autocratic when and where we had the power ; we were apologetic and sullen where we were powerless. We punished the Arabs occasionally for their crimes, not because they were worse than the things that the Turks or Persians did, but because they could not hit back : they had no gunboats with which to retaliate in the Persian Gulf ; they possessed no city like Teheran, which could at least make Russia listen ; they had no Constantinople from which to address the Germans. If a world-war occurred, the Persian Gulf, like every other remote outpost of our trade and influence, would be the spoil of the victor—be it England, Turkey or Russia. At that moment there were only three immediate claimants to power : Turkey, which meant a slipshod order-cum-bastinado rule ; Russia, which meant the knout ; Great Britain, or finally, as an alternative, Anarchy. I had no doubt which of these would make the best regent. There were no others. Germany was still far away ; France could not hope to rule there, whatever happened—she would continue gun-running and making halfpennies out of the misery of others, as she had done in the past. If the Great Powers signed a self-denying ordinance and condemned the Gulf to run itself, chaos, piracy, bloodshed and active slavery—in fact, all the abuses that we had long been fighting—would grow like Brazilian weeds. We were the only people who could make an effective move, yet we did nothing. Our position was mean and paradoxical. Our altruism was founded on egotism ; our egotism was hampered by our limping altruism. We were not unselfish enough to have a policy of the heart, nor hard enough to have a policy of the head. We tripped over our own feet. We risked all by risking nothing. And yet, in spite of these facts and inferences, I was not quite sure that

a case could not be made out for our apparently incomprehensible inaction.

Buxton and I had much trouble over quarantine, for down the coast we were either not allowed to land, or on landing found ourselves in difficulties. At Karachi the Father of Peace, by a blunder that none but he could have perpetrated, fell asleep upon soiled and possibly infectious linen, and would have been kept in quarantine but for the kindness of the authorities.

The quiet of our voyage was disturbed. One morning early a few days later, I was thrown half out of my bunk by a violent jerk. The next moment there was a thudding of feet on deck and the air was rent with lamentations. Buxton came down in haste to say that we had struck upon a rock, that the ship had a very heavy list upon her, and that she might go down. The Father of Peace blubbered and called upon his Maker. I firmly declined to leave the warmth of my cabin while our fate was in doubt. Was it not better for a convalescent to go warm to death than shaking with cold, which might stamp him as a coward before all beholders?

It appeared that the pilot, owing to what he called a manifestation of Providence, but to which the captain gave another name, had driven the poor *Africa* upon a reef some six miles from Bahrein. Finally, as my limited powers as an interpreter were in demand, I dressed and went on deck.

Bahrein was still half hidden in the morning mist. Already a fleet of Arab sambuks<sup>1</sup> surrounded the vessel, proclaiming all was lost if the sea should rise. The American millionaires were in a state of pained amazement. In the distance the island of Bahrein began to shine. "What accommodation," they said, "do you reckon we shall find upon that lone land?"

<sup>1</sup> Boats,

"Arab huts," said I, and listened to their description of their palatial home in Philadelphia. Finally, with raucous cries, we and our belongings were let down into an Arab barque. After about an hour's row we reached Bahrein, carried through the sea on the backs of groaning men. There enormous white donkeys, their chests dyed scarlet with henna, awaited us. We mounted, and all the donkeys galloped headlong towards their different homes. They had no bridles, no stirrups and no reins. I heard the lamentable cries of the separated American couple as their donkeys went different ways and their knees grazed sharp corners, mingled with lugubrious shrieks from the Arabs who raced after them. Buxton and I also raised our voices in useless protest.

At last we collected and reached the British Residency. It was a long, low white building, gleaming in pale sunlight, with vast verandahs. On one of these there were a number of prisoners, tied by the leg to a bench, and in the midst of them Captain Prideaux, the British Resident, dispensing patriarchal justice. He showed no signs of deserting his duty, till Buxton and I clamoured for food, when he took us in and entertained us with Eastern hospitality, which he continued to do during our stay upon the island.

Bahrein means "Two Seas," and is two islands, of which Manama, the Place of Sleep, is the Capital. A mile and a half away lies the Island of Muharrak (The Place of Burning), where Sheikh Esa, the ruler, has his home. This island has one very unusual feature, which I believe is found also near the shore of Tripoli in Africa; off its coast, rising from the floor of the sea, are freshwater springs, and men dive daily for fresh water, which they bring up in skins. The water is good, though an unskilful diver may allow it to become mixed and brackish. The island is a pleasant

oasis. It is friendly, not hateful like the abominable coast that faces it. It is not antagonistic to life, and does not breed such a missing link as the littoral Arab. It has none of the tortured look of the opposite coast. The golden-dusted roads that cross it are broad, and shaded on either side by long forests of date-palms, deepening into an impenetrable greenness, cool with the sound of wind amongst the great leaves and the tinkle of flowing waters. A rider would think of the island as a place of golden sand, green palms and silver water, enchanted by sunlight.

Bahrein in those days sold its pearls but lived upon its dates, which were cultivated by hundreds of clear-running channels that glitter through the palm forests. Here and there are fig-trees, less often pomegranates. There is a ride to the Phœnician tombs, across red and silver sand, running streams and pools of crystal water that catch the sunlight through the palms, with every now and then stretches of desert under a blue sky, made for galloping. Once I met the Sheikh Esa's sons, their golden agals bound about their brows and their robes flowing in the breeze as they rode, hawk on wrist and hound at heel, upon their blood-Arab horses. It was a gallant sight, and the fantastic chivalry of their appearance was no more out of date in the Arabian sunshine than the beauty of their falcons and their horses.

Bahrein is an island that ought to have a quiet, agricultural destiny, and that it has never achieved. I will summarise briefly its history before 1906.

In 1867 Sheikh Mahommed, of Bahrein, broke one unreasonable clause of a treaty concluded with Great Britain in 1860: this clause bound the poor man to abstain from piracy. He went to the mainland and sacked Bidaa, the "capital" of Katar, and pillaged some of the adjacent villages. For following the secular practice of his ancestors he was deposed, and

his brother, Sheikh Ali, took his place and was condemned to pay a great fine, which seemed to me hard upon Ali, who was not responsible; but I was told that it appealed to the native sense of justice. Meanwhile, the chief of Katar, who apparently had had no indemnification for his loss, joined the Turks, as an experiment to see if benefit lay in that direction. The Turks persuaded him to become their partisan, but explained to the British Embassy that they had not really intended to do this; it had just been a diplomatic accident. We also, it appears, acknowledged the Sheikh more or less inadvertently, though we took active steps against him in 1882 when he expelled Bunnias and Bahreinees from the mainland; also later, when he undertook an expedition against Bahrein. Sheikh Mahommed, Son of Trouble, had taken refuge on the Pirate Coast, and after a couple of years, by the help of Arab treachery, he was able to capture Manama and kill his brother, Sheikh Ali. The British Resident believed that the appointed time had come to bombard Manama. He also captured the versatile Mahommed, who, in a pathetic attempt to make all possible friends, was flying the British, French, Persian, Turkish and Arab flags at the same time. An appeal was made to the people on the island to choose their chief and they acclaimed Sheikh Esa, whose rule has endured. In 1902 Sheikh Hamad, his son, was recognised by Great Britain as his successor.

I spent part of my convalescence in writing an article for *Blackwood's Magazine* to show how vital it was that we should immediately annex Bahrein, and I still think I was right. Sheikh Esa virtually owned the whole island and he was wedded to the customs of his forefathers; he was as improvident and conservative as they, and whatever virtue may lie in conservatism in England, there is less to be said for

it in the Persian Gulf. Sheikh Esa was a Sunni, and possessed a nominal chieftainship over certain tribes of the Bedawin of the mainland, who yearly came in uncouth bands to receive a hospitality he could not refuse. The cultivators of the island are Shias, that is to say heretics, and, if not vanquished, they are at least subjects with few rights ; a status which increases the intolerance with which they are treated by the Arabs of the mainland. These savage Bedawin of the mainland descend as poor relations, but they behave with the arrogance of the very rich in London or Berlin. Their camels browse upon the gardens of the penniless, and there is no redress for a hundred minor oppressions. We have sat still observing persecution.

Looking back upon that state of things it still seems to me that it was muddle, and not a self-denying ordinance, that withheld us from annexing the island. Our policy concerning that small territory was liberalism run to seed. For a hundred years we had lighted and policed the Gulf. We had abolished its grosser abuses ; we had even made one barren rock, the Isle of Kishm, a lighthouse of Liberty, for any slave who contrived to place his foot upon it became a free man ; and yet, for one abuse we had righted, we had left ten untouched. Throughout the length and breadth of the Gulf it may have been inevitable to leave them, but Bahrein was under our control. However expedient, it was not right to assume the insignia of power and leave the island prostrate beneath the injustice of its native rulers, tempered only by a casual, and what must have seemed to the inhabitants a whimsical, interference on our part.

At this distance of time I will not describe all the conditions of the pearl-diving industry of Bahrein. To-day they have probably changed. It was a picturesque, but a cruel industry, from which Bombay

derived the main benefit, though Sheikh Esa also drew a considerable profit. It was naturally to the advantage of the merchants and the *nakhudas* (captains) of the pearling craft, that their divers should be dependent upon them, a dependence which was easily achieved. Great Britain deplored a lack of humanity, but she was rarely able to interfere. Captain Prideaux, the Resident, was an honourable and capable man, but his power was limited to chaining people by the leg to a bench, admonishing culprits and inflicting light punishments for grave crimes.

It was not long before I began to see that my way across Arabia would be sown with many thorns. Turk and Arab were both jealous of the English in Bahrein, and the traveller was likely to receive little help when the sea was crossed. The Turks flouted us, and when Prideaux went to El Katif he was not allowed to walk in the town; and when Captain Bowman, of the *Sphinx*, wished to land at Ojair he was refused permission by the Turks to set foot upon that unprofitable soil.

The adventurous Wolff faded into the background at Behrein. He told me, however, one last adventure. He had been seeking romance *à la* Haroun-al-Raschid with Hajji Ali. The two of them, with a frail beauty, had been trapped in a mud house, in the walls of which her relations made a breach. There Wolff and Hajji Ali killed two men with golf clubs, the only weapons that they had. The avengers of blood were now on their tracks. So for a time the Gulf must know them no more. I could not tell if this story was or was not true, but thought it probable that if Wolff and I joined forces, I, too, would sooner or later be made partly or entirely responsible for something that he had done, therefore I bore the parting philosophically. On the island I saw a number of missionaries, and at first decided to try my luck by Koweit, where the odds

against success were unknown, rather than attempt what seemed the impossible route from Ojair. Zwemer, who had written *The Cradle of Islam*, was not in Bahrein, but the missionary, Van Ess, and others, had stores of information.

We went visiting. The old Sheikh was a venerable figure and received us with stately courtesy in his home. I had, however, the feeling that the ceremony had been rehearsed, and that if my life and Buxton's were to depend upon the Sheikh's goodwill, we should die young. The silences were longer than with the Turks, and they struck one as rather a rest after the effort of speech than, as with the Ottomans, preparation for a further expression of their thoughts. Sheikh Esa and his Court were dressed in fine robes of camel-hair, black, orange or red. We drank the coffee that tastes as if lemon and quinine were its chief ingredients, and water, hot, sweet and strongly flavoured with cinnamon. If the cup was not shaken when it was returned to the servant it was instantly filled; one paid dearly for a moment's forgetfulness.

Most of the official houses in the Persian Gulf are built upon the same plan. I have been told that there was no provision in the Indian Budget for building houses for the representatives of Great Britain in Persia and the Gulf. As these Residences could only be built out of funds set aside for "repairs," they were consequently built huge room by huge room, and without any plan. Ultimately the repairs amounted to immense white, flat buildings, with broad verandahs. On one of these verandahs I lay from dawn to sunset, watching many types of prisoners and hearing Prideaux sitting in judgment.

*Diary. January 13, 1906.*—Went to see the old Kadi this afternoon with Buxton. Discussed the



attributes of infinity. Also Moslem justice. “*Autres pays, autres mœurs*,” said the Kadi in Arabic. If a man stole he should be warned, and if the offence were repeated his hand cut off. Buxton said that the theft came from the brain, not from the hand. The Kadi answered that the two were connected. Then freewill on the *tapis*. He intoned in the dim room, using beautiful and sonorous Arabic. He believed in the possibility of our salvation. Prideaux’s *moonshi* interpreted for us. While we argued a feast was brought: scarlet pomegranate seeds, sweets of camel’s milk and sugar, sherbet of honey and milk, strong scented coffee, oranges, limes and sweetmeats. He patted me affectionately most of the time, and fed me, passing almonds or pomegranate seeds from his hand to mine. On leaving he said some people were like stones (B. said that this referred to him), but that I was most sensible. If he had known that earlier he would have asked me before to come; as it was would we come back on Thursday? He said I should stay here three months. He is, Prideaux says, clever, but anti-English. He showed his cleverness at the time of the row by volunteering as a hostage. He had some sons and a little daughter, whom he chiefly used to throw food to, and dramatically as examples of thieves, murderers, etc., on trial for hypothetical crimes, when he was developing his arguments.

The Kadi introduced me to a friend of his, a rich Arab. I spent a happy afternoon talking about the possibilities of crossing into Arabia. His was a beautiful, spacious room, decorated with fine carpets, which he offered with friendly humility to me as presents. He said that friendship was the gold of the world, and that though poor in fortune, his heart was rich. He wished for my companionship. At this moment the wife of the millionaire came in. She

looked as out of place as Lot's Pillar in a drawing-room—and so she was. I left that good old Arab and went out into the evening. The sky was the colour of Numidian marble, the faint air was sweet with hashish, and a muezzin called to prayer from a minaret. The sound of the evening sea, the colour of the sky, the scent of the air, are still fixed in my memory.

Leland Buxton had been a long time away from England. Before we met in Egypt he had been with his Bulgar friends in Macedonia, and he was anxious now to go home. It was obvious that my convalescence would take time. With pleasure in the knowledge of an enduring friendship, we decided to go our different ways. He left for Bagdad while I continued to inhale the air of Bahrein in the house of Prideaux, until I should be well enough to attempt the crossing of the desert from below the pirate coast at the port of Ojair to the oasis of El Hasa, and there, with promises of rich reward, persuade the Arabs to conduct me across the Peninsula.

I counted upon Maria Teresa dollars doing their work as far as El Hasa, when promises, the prestige of England and an obvious sincerity were to carry me onwards. After much discussion that way seemed to offer the best chance. Ojair was only thirty miles from the oasis of El Hasa, where, if fortune was favourable, I could join a caravan about to cross the desert. The difficulty appeared to lie between Ojair and El Hasa. Prideaux said he could give me no official help; should the Turks take me prisoner, or even hold me up, a political question would arise if I had an official permit from the Consulate. I saw the point and I readily agreed. When I asked the Father of Peace if he were prepared to go with me, Abu Salaam replied as at Aden, though in less confident tones, that "man could only die once," but adding that he desired, if it was convenient to me, to postpone death. He

said it would be advisable and necessary to take a notorious rogue, who knew the fatal country, and he engaged a pock-marked Arab, Saïd, who was as turbulent and unpleasant as the sirocco. Through this criminal I hired a dhow for a number of Maria Teresa dollars, and went aboard her. The clamour from the Arab boats sounded louder than that of nesting gulls. Once aboard I discovered that she was crammed with black humanity: the frugal crafty Arabs knew of the foreigner's journey and I had unconsciously, and most unwillingly, paid half the fare for every man, woman and child on board.

The smell and noise aboard this dhow-bungalow, or merkab, were abominable. She was a boat of a few tons, drawing perhaps six feet of water. The deck was on one level. The covering above the poop was open fore and aft, so that the helmsman could steer and also help to reef the sails by a rope passing over the straw roof through an opening. It is a marvel he was ever able to steer at all. There was constantly a crowd in front of him and an open fire was lighted on an iron frame a couple of yards away, for cooking rice and boiling water, the smoke of which burned one's eye-balls and made the wind seem a lotion of relief. As we left at dawn, the whole world of air was stirred by a storm of sunlight which swept the mist away.

The boat was like a fourth-class continental railway carriage, but there were no stations with restaurants. It was filled by a clamorous, garlic-fed crowd, and with children who always seemed to have a grievance. This was natural as they lived in a kind of Black Hole of Calcutta in the middle of the boat. The dirt on the deck was disgusting. The only sweeping was done by the naked feet of the Arabs. Monstrous insects like giant cockchafers had one at their mercy from the roof of straw that covered the poop. Prayers

went on most of the time, though there were interruptions when business or seasickness required it.

The first night we anchored a couple of hours before sunset opposite to a village, B'daya ; the boat took us part of the way. I waded the rest, over the most beautiful silver sand, for the Arabs are too proud to carry an infidel. Saïd and the Father of Peace came too. We went to the *medjlis*,<sup>1</sup> where we were met by the son of the Sheikh, who had gone to Menama.

He was a boy of about twelve, perfectly self-possessed, with charming manners. He ordered coffee and made polite conversation. Children came to the door and, as dusk fell, insinuated themselves into the room : most of them had never seen a white man. They had not had the education of the Sheikh's son, and they roared with laughter when I blew smoke rings with a cigarette. This enraged the boy, who seized a long cane and struck at every bare foot within reach. Then he left, I suppose to prepare a meal, and other men drifted in from the night to salute and to talk the politics of the Persian Gulf. Meanwhile Saïd said his prayers in a corner of the room—I thought with sanctimonious affectation. After a time we were invited to the house of the Kadi. I was pressed to sleep the night, but refused, on the ground that I was not well and did not wish to rise extremely early the following morning. Our meal came in on a beautiful mat made of many colours. The dish of rice must have measured sixteen inches in diameter. As the guest of the evening, everyone else thought it their duty to give me titbits, popping them into my mouth faster than I could swallow, until I felt absolutely stuffed, but the rice was delicious.

In a silence that idiot, the Father of Peace, told the company that there was quarantine in Aden. I said, "No, there isn't," or at least, that I had not

<sup>1</sup> *Medjlis* = meeting.

been made to undergo it. "Ah, woe," they answered, "it is then for the poor only, for the sake of the money." My Arabic was inadequate to explain. We left about nine. All the village came down to see us off. I walked through moonlit water, over the white sand that was softer than any carpet, to where the Sheikh's boat waited to take us back to the ship. It had become very cold.

The next day, August 9, a *shimal* (north wind) blew and the boat heaved at anchor upon a waste of green waters. I had a long argument with the captain, after which we set sail, but he soon stripped the mats and we remained all day long off a date island, rocking opposite a red desert. That date island seemed the scenery of an eternal boredom, and the sickening slopes of green water, after all their promises, never broke into foam. I felt as if I was becoming a part of the revolting scenery. A wretched baby, buried somewhere in the blackness of the boat, noted every big wave (and nearly every wave was big) with a faint wail, hatefully monotonous as the sea itself. They gave me some bread and honey, which was a pleasant change, as no man could stand for long the rice cooked on board that boat; a white flabby slab of tasteless tepidity. The captain went off in the small boat to the island, while I was sleeping; there was no way of getting at him, and there we had to stay, with almost everyone except myself sick. But there is an end to all things; the captain came back rather shamefaced. The next day we arrived at Angarya. The sky was brilliantly clear and the sea a hard blue that threw back the sunlight.

I was not on very good terms with either the crew or the passengers. I could not stand their continued repetition of *Inshallah* (If God wills), which is their way of saying "We don't agree with you," and "That can't be done." Any suggested improvement that

came from me was always answered by "All is from God. God be praised." They did not like me any more than I liked them. "Allah," they said, "of what race is this man?" At Angarya I went ashore, though the crew declared that the place was inhabited by wild Bedawin from the mainland, who allowed no stranger to disembark and were allied to Sheikh Ali, our prisoner in Bombay. I thought I would see how brave Saïd really was, as I knew there was no danger anywhere in Bahrein in the daytime. He came reluctantly. Abu Salaam excused himself on the ground that he must stay and look after the biscuits. The *nakhuda* (captain) came with us, but disappeared into a mosque. The people were certainly Bedawin. They had a beautiful carriage and stood up with a defiant grace. Their limbs were clean-cut and more shapely than those of the town-living Arabs, but there must be a large mixture of black blood in them, for I saw many heads with curly hair and low foreheads. They were not friendly, but I bought eggs and milk amongst a frowning crowd. I bargained for a donkey to carry me through the sea, but felt that this was undignified, and I was irritated when Saïd, to whom I had given my coat, passed it on to a dirty negro, who wore it. I splashed through a couple of hundred yards of cold glittering sea with my disconsolate followers; the whole party of us got very wet and the air was chilly as the sun sank. On the little boat one man had to bale continuously, and once on board I went to a cheerless damp bed, eating what there was in my sleeping-rug; a mattress would have made a great difference. A convivial party assembled about my head and told good stories that kept them in shouts of laughter across me till about twelve. Then I broke up the company harshly, saying that I meant to sleep, but found a new acquaintance, a charming merchant, and talked to him for half an

hour yet. He told me that they spoke the Arabic of the nightingale at Ojair ; nevertheless I hoped that they would not do it all night.

A storm came in the early morning, and the captain called out orders from the helm, which were repeated, not only by himself, but again and again by all the passengers and the crew, in hoarse shouts. The next morning Arabia lay before us, a long low line of yellow sand above the variable blue and green of the sea. It was bitterly cold. I woke up two hours before dawn, to hear the Arabs discussing the possibility of taking all I had from me, but fell asleep again.

We moved down the coast with the help of a swift breeze and arrived in the afternoon at Ojair. A soldier came to meet the dhow, dressed in Turkish-Arabic uniform. On a bench outside the fort, a hundred yards away and beside its archway, sat all the local officials ; the *Yuzbashi*, or captain, Tewfik Effendi, rose up as I said how-do-you-do in Turkish. He talked a little French, and a blue-eyed, red-bearded Circassian officer a few words of German. A Greek chemist was also there, Gabriel Mikhalaki. He had practically forgotten his own language and was a shocking bad interpreter. Later on when I used him to talk to the Arabs, I used to say something in Turkish for him to put into Arabic. He used to repeat my words, with enormous emphasis, in Turkish, sometimes adding an Arabic or a Hellenic termination. The guardian of the Customs talked in Arabic and a few words of broken English, but he was qualified to beg, I think, in any language. The old Mudir talked both. He said that without an *izn* (permission) I could not go to El Hasa. I gave him my passport. They promised, and sat down and wrote three letters, which they read me, - all of them very favourable, and which they promised to send that night. The guardian of the Customs looked a poisonous weed,

I thought there was little chance of being able to get away.

The fort was a big quadrangle about 130 yards long and 30 or 40 yards broad ; it had a courtyard inside which resembled an inhabited grave-yard, where camels rested. I noticed the Bedawin women did all the work, even to the loading of these camels. I was given one cell to myself ; my servants had another. My cell had a bolt on the inside and on the outside of the door, and four windows, well barred, high up out of reach, in the very thick wall. There was a wooden platform on which to sleep, weeds were growing in one corner of the cell and it seemed to have been used as a chicken-run, as a number of hens tried to come in ; the door had great cracks in it. A truculent Punjabi invaded my room with a goat as soon as I had settled in. I turned the goat out. The Indian wanted money for his pilgrimage to Mecca ; he said he came to the first sahib he had met. Was I not his father and his mother ? I gave him a lot of money, but I believed that he was on other business than a pilgrimage.

That night I dined with the Yuzbashi, the Circassian, the guardian of the Customs, and the chemist Mikhalaki, and after those five days on sea revelled in good rice with currants, apricots and chicken.

The first two days passed pleasantly enough, for I was still weak and in need of quiet. My hope was to be able to reach a well some five miles distant from the Turkish fort, to which Arabs frequently came to water their camels, and these Arabs I proposed to induce with fair words and Maria Teresas, in which my faith grew, to conduct me to El Hasa. The Turks made no objection to my walking about close to the fort and provided me with a soldier to keep off the pariah dogs. I saw little in the way of life except enormous black beetles, and the tiny bird of the sand,



called Allah Kerim because it pipes continually that God is merciful. But it was pleasant lying on the sand, which moved and rustled perpetually under the desert wind and had a green shimmer from the rare blades of grass.

As I grew better acquainted with the life of the fort I began to like the people, but I found it difficult to settle who was most likely to help me. The old Mudir approached me continually. He was darker than the Arabs, with a white grandfather's beard and furious red eyes ; he wore no collar and no socks, and his trousers were a disgrace. I was sure that he knew that I had hidden intentions. There was also a naval lieutenant, who had a most charming native courtesy ; he was called *Emir el Bahr*, Prince of the Sea, that is "Admiral," as a joke. In the morning we sat at the receipt of custom and I watched the unwilling Bahreinis paying their admission price of one rupee ; or else we sat in what the fort called its café, where unloaded dates attracted a mist of flies, in which officers played cards.

They brought out their possessions with pride, to show me maps, atlases and compasses ; and Suliman, the Circassian, asked me numerous questions about Greenwich time and bathymetry, which I found it hard to answer. He had a passionate craving for education, and no condemned man ever hated prison more than poor Suliman his post. A lamb was our companion, which was petted by all : as they caressed it they said, "Wallah ! What a pity it must grow into a sheep and die !"

On the second day the Turks proposed a hunting expedition, which filled me with keen anticipation until I found that its limit was to be five hundred yards from the fort and that our safety was to be secured by advance, flank and rear guards. These guards effectively ensured not only our safety but

the safety of any possible game. It was said that there were gazelle, and also sand-grouse, but we saw no signs of these beyond the screen of our protectors. As we started, some of the Arab soldiers began shooting at the pariah dogs. I was sorry for the dogs and in order to protect them walked between them and the Arabs, but the next moment another volley passed me, and all the comment that I heard was, "Behold the *Nasrani*!" (the Christian). The walk was enchanting, and a wind like a song passed over sand that was made of gleaming particles of shell.

Presently the party sat down and began to drink native spirits. After an interval, during which the captain and I smoked apart, they began wrestling for a revolver, which went off in the middle of a group which scattered, laughing heartily.

Gradually life began to grow unpleasant. The soldiers were Arabs and discontented; there was no town of any kind; the land was a shadowy nullity by night and a fury of wind and light by day. The Bedawin sometimes camped just out of range of the fort and at night hostile country began a hundred yards from the door; sentries on the roof called to each other all night long.

I had been told at Bahrein that a gift, more than money, was likely to help me, especially if this gift took the form of spirits. I knew this to be immoral, nevertheless I gave a case to Khamis, the Guardian of the Customs. After this his eyes became still more inflamed, but his manner more friendly, and he began to discuss the best methods of arriving at El Hasa. The relations between myself and the unwarlike Greek chemist also became good. This man had with him a *baldiz* (sister-in-law), Miriam, a woman from Bagdad, who boasted, however, that her real home was in Macedonia and her royal descent from the Porphyro-

geniti. But the story of her ancestry impressed me less than her very dark complexion. She told me that I was like her late lamented husband, who had lived in one of the less reputable quarters of Galata. I asked in what respects I favoured him. She said I had the same walk and the same blue eyes. She complained bitterly of the "reproach" of having to cover her face and of being compelled to submit to insults. She showed me a book printed in Arabic which she was able to read, an accomplishment that made her very proud; it was called *La Vie Pieuse* and was edited by the Archbishop of Babylon.

"Let us all go," said Miriam.

"I know all the great men of El Hasa, Bey," said Mikhalaki, "and can give you wise counsel."

I said I would think it over. The next day was sorrowful: forlorn sands, mournful seas, grey sky; even at what I imagined was half-past eleven there was nobody about. No wood had come in, and there was nothing but a few biscuits to eat and a little potted meat. In the night ravenous cats with blazing yellow eyes found their way into my shed, desperate with starvation. Before the first meal at one o'clock the old Mudir came in and I saw baksheesh in his eye; he told me that a German who had come here two years before had offered him a considerable bribe.

"That man," said I, "cannot have known you or the Arab people, or he would not have thus insulted your honour."

After a pause, during which he seemed to chew the cud upon this thought, he said he had refused it as it was a reproach. He then talked to me of the country and his life here, and said that about fourteen of his children had died. I said the climate must be accursed.

"No," he said, "it was from God, and the small-pox."

Some Arabs came in at that moment and stared at me in a very unfriendly way. The Mudir went and talked to them, and returned to me saying that he was making arrangements for me to escape under the escort of the Sheikh of Benihajar. I had the feeling that I was not behaving courteously to the captain of the fort, but after all he was preventing my seeing a country which he and his government directly owed to England ; so I said that if he, the Mudir, and if the Sheikh of Benihajar, would give me guarantees, I was ready to accept the offer.

The Circassian Suliman then came in to ask me to explain a number of botanical terms to him, which I did very badly. He told me that my servant Saïd was a drunkard and a danger. He said that when we came here he had gone to the captain, to the Mudir and to the Khamis, saying, " My master is a rich man and will give you three hundred rupees," but to their credit they had sent him about his business, treating him roughly. The Father of Peace was terrified of Saïd and began the study of cooking at my expense. The water was the vilest I have ever drunk ; I had it all boiled, and it tasted like melted rocks and it smelt as if dead animals had lain in it. Whenever possible, I took tea.

Now supplies ceased. Tewfik Effendi, who, I suppose, had got wind of my negotiations, became very suspicious. He asked me if I had a camera, to which I said " Yes," and at his request I promised to take no photographs of the fort or the sand round it. He told me that he had not allowed the English gunboat to come in, that I was the first Englishman to land there and that he had been in two minds about letting me come at all. I was exasperated, but said that I was glad that his better mind had won.

On Sunday the 14th I had another talk with Gabriel the Greek and Miriam. They said that a few months

before they had been at Ojair on their road to El Hasa, when there was a fight with the Bedawin, and the soldiers came back, carrying the heads of the tribesmen on their daggers. I went out before sunset and left the shining white shell-sand for a trampled red soil like an English ploughed field. Hundreds of the small grey-white birds declared that "God was merciful," and many desert mice ran about there ; the Turks kept me in sight and drove off the pariahs as I came back.

On returning, I found Gabriel and Miriam waiting for me, with some Sheikhs, in the fort. It was settled that I was to meet these men five miles away at the well, when I was to be put on a camel and carried to El Hasa, after which all would go well and I should be an honourable and a profitable guest. I said that I would take the Father of Peace with me, but that Saïd was a son of Belial, that I would pay him his wages and give him a present, but that he should not be of the company. The fair Miriam protested loudly, and said that if I had been going to stay on at the fort I could have had Saïd driven into the desert to die, but it would be better still to take him with us : "And when we are on the march," she said, "we can leave him, and so death is certain." I looked coldly upon this amiable suggestion and went to get two hours' sleep before starting. Suliman the Circassian, who had been a good deal in Gabriel's room, came to me with raging toothache and a swelled face ; I gave him what I had. He said the pain was unforgivable. It was monstrous that Islam should be such a stationary creed. He did not want to blaspheme, but if he did he could not do it in Turkish. He left, and Abu Salaam, a huddled, miserable little coward, rushed in, in terror of Saïd, who had threatened to cut his throat. He implored me to be careful how I dismissed him, shaking while he spoke. Saïd followed on his heels, full of swagger ; he said he believed I had a bottle

of brandy and that he required it, also some daggers. He went out quicker than he came in.

By that time I had had quite enough of Saïd, who was a thorough blackguard. I told the Father of Peace that he could, if he wished, fetch his blanket and sleep in my shed, and so be free of the fear of Saïd ; but at the same time I told him that I proposed to leave the fort that night and expected him to come with me and to carry the bag of Maria Teresa dollars. The Father of Peace then made a flowery speech, the gist of which was that for no reward on earth would he adventure himself upon the inimical soil of Arabia, and lay down in the corner.

There was a knock at the door and it was opened by Gabriel, who announced that the Arabs at the last moment had said that the attempt must be postponed until the following night ; I could sleep in quiet.

The next day nothing happened. Some food had come in and I gave a luncheon party. Suliman Effendi's tooth was better, and after lunch he said to me, " Ah, my dear, what lives we lead ! It is even an adventure to meet this Greek chemist. You talk to the rulers of the world."

I was so touched by his craving for knowledge that I gave him my only French and Turkish dictionaries.

In the evening the Chief of the Customs called upon me and talked in a very friendly way. I said it was impossible for me to give presents until I had successfully ended my journey. The only presents that could be given were Maria Teresa dollars, and if a man was going to be at all generous he would want half a dozen porters to carry these about, but that if I could accomplish my journey I should not forget him. I explained that I did not wish to get him into trouble through being an accessory to my plans, and I gave him a present and a bottle of port, which I

asked him to share with the keeper of the door, while I went for a walk by the sea. I then said good-bye to the Father of Peace, who was trembling like an aspen, and in a few minutes passed out through the unlocked door of the fort. The sky was very cloudy. The tramp of the sentry on the roof was audible, and when I heard it passing towards the other end of the fort I walked away: the pariahs did not even growl in their sleep.

I went along hastily and furtively, changing the burden of the Maria Teresa dollars from one hand to the other. The moon shone faintly upon the sea. Once or twice I rested in good spirits, drinking in the beauty of the desert; then a sudden collapse came upon me. I had overestimated my strength. There was nothing to be done but to return to the fort as quietly as I had left it. All went well until its walls cast their black shadow upon the sand, when an appalling uproar broke out and I was attacked upon all sides by the savage pariahs that starved upon the garbage of the caravans. I heard a voice hailing loudly from the roof, but I could pay no attention while trying to beat off the dogs. I found this impossible without drawing my revolver and shot one quickly. This drove the others back. The great door of the fort stood open and men poured out. The whole fort was awake. The Captain was there, looking extremely grim. As I came in, he said: "The sentry on the roof has orders to shoot after shouting three times. He disobeyed those orders to-night; he shall be punished to-morrow." Suliman Bey, with his face still swollen, came up to me and said, "Oh, my lamb, what wild deeds are these?"

With him I walked to my cell.

The next morning, after breakfast, he paid me a visit and spoke very frankly. He said: "This Captain of ours here, Tewfik Effendi, is not a bad man,

but he must carry out his orders. Our Government, which is not a good Government, will not have strangers in these Arab lands, where there is constant trouble for us poor Turks, for which we cannot always assign a reason. It will be open to you to stay here as long as you like, but you will get no further. This is truly an inhospitable land. The Captain does not distrust you, but your attempt of last night to get away could not succeed. Its best success would be the worst result for you. As it is, the poor man who did not shoot you is in irons, and he will suffer a greater penance before he has expiated his fault."

I said to him, "O Suliman Effendi, you and the Captain and I are all of us right. My intention to go into the interior was inevitably a trouble for him. He must either keep me here as a prisoner—and he is a man of courtesy—or he must allow me to go against the wishes, if not the orders, of his Government. I, on the other hand, think that we have helped you a great deal, and that you should not refuse a man admission whose bearing is his passport. And you, you see both sides. But I am sorry for the man who is imprisoned. If he had shot me or shot at me, and done his duty, he might still have been in trouble. The world is very complicated. I will ask Tewfik Effendi to pardon him."

I went straight to Tewfik Effendi and told him that I had intended to go to El Hasa, that I harboured no design against the Turkish Government and that my attempt had been defeated by circumstances. I begged him to release the sentry who had failed to fire. He answered with unsmiling sternness that he knew his duty towards all men, guests, enemies or subordinates. I replied that I did not desire to instruct him, but to ask a favour, as from one gentleman to another. He replied, "Your pleasure is my will." The sentry was released; and all his comrades,



quite unnecessarily, called me brother. The Circassian Suliman was very pleased. He drew me aside and said that the laws of Turkey were excellent. There was even one which sent a man to prison for six years to meditate upon the sin of drawing his knife in anger, even though he had returned it to its sheath unused.

We sat about in the café, all rather ill at ease, as the sun set. Then Khamis came to my prison and swore by the triple oath, with my head thrown in, that I was a good man and made life pleasant by my presence, and that he would do what I ordered him, whatever it might be. He proceeded to ask me to say how much money I carried with me. I told him I had been advised to bring very little, because, if I had much, the Bedawin would take it from me.

At this point Suliman came in, with his face again badly swollen with toothache. I was becoming very tired of garrison life.

I hunted out my drugs, gave Suliman an enormous dope from Savory & Moore, pressed another one upon Khamis, and pushed them both out-of-doors. Khamis was supported to his bed by an impudent young black, who crooned an Arab song.

The Father of Peace continued to sleep in my room. He was becoming like a man bereft of language and of sense, and he followed me like my shadow. The next day a lieutenant in Arab uniform arrived, looking very picturesque, gallant and gay, to be shaved by a barber who stropped his razor on the sand. He reappeared almost bald. Later he visited me and talked openly about the bad state of Turkey: all the garrisons in Arab lands, said he, were practically in a state of siege. But I think he was a loyal servant of his Government, for he added that no man in his senses would desire to go to El Hasa. He himself was going to Bahrein, so I gave him a letter for Pri-

deaux, whom he said he knew and liked. By the blessing of heaven, I also got him to take Saïd, whom I paid off with a big present, whereupon the Father of Peace became like a soul released from bondage. The smile in his heart showed on his face as his tormentor was leaving. Some goats had been brought in by the Bedawin and I determined to feast the garrison. They were, I think, pleased and they were very polite, but I had an uncomfortable feeling that they regarded my hospitality as a kind of penance on my part for having tried to escape. They told me that there was (a) war between Austria and Hungary, (b) Austria-Hungary and Italy, (c) Austria-Hungary and Turkey, (d) Turkey and all the Powers, in which case, said the Captain, my own position would become a delicate one. I said we need not contemplate that until these very unlikely circumstances arose.

The Turks still held out prospects of my possibly reaching El Hasa, but these I now believed to be illusory; I declared my intention of returning to Bahrein. Suliman Effendi came into my room. "Ah," said he, "we Turks—for we Moslem Circassians count ourselves Turks—we own great areas, but we are indeed a small race, and these heavy duties are imposed upon us by the heroism of our ancestors. We have fought and we have fought, and in the extermination of our enemies we have neglected to produce children. As for me, one day I shall die here, where no man can live. Shall I take an Arab woman to live with me and beget sons whose real parentage will be the sand? This cruel sand, I curse it and I spit upon it."

I gave a dinner that night to all the fort, which was a great success, and the remains gave me an excellent breakfast in the morning. The naval lieutenant or "Prince of the Sea" made the best bargain for me that he could with the captain of a dhow, a truculent Arab, who accepted a number of rupees on condition

that he was to start at once. Then a violent customs quarrel arose, with which, apparently, the lieutenant had nothing to do. Indeed, he did not understand one word and remained paralysed throughout, murmuring "*Edebsiz! Dayak ister!*" ("Shame! He needs the stick!") (No Englishman would stand the impudence which the Turks tolerate.) Suliman came out with his few poor treasures of civilisation, which he asked me to accept as a gift. I refused, saying that he would understand the reason of my refusing—it would so soon be in my power to buy such things, and they must mean so much to him. As for Tewfik, the Captain, he had that quality which the English share with the Turks: he was a good fellow, but his anger was slow to cool, and he did not help me in an unusually difficult position.

If the Arab captain or the crew of the dhow which had brought me from Bahrein to Ojair had annexed the infernal dollars, and if the Father of Peace and I had disappeared into the night, they would have been called to account by the British Consulate; that constituted a guarantee of our safety. But the new crew with whom I was about to embark were not Bahreinis. They hailed from heaven knows where. There was no particular reason why they should behave well, and the Father of Peace, the Maria Teresa dollars and I were, to a greater degree than I liked, in their hands. Tewfik Effendi took no trouble to make the journey safer by warning the skipper and crew of the boat that he would hold them accountable for our safety; but Suliman and the naval lieutenant came down and swore oaths of vengeance if anything should happen to us.

The new dhow was less crowded than the old, but her crew looked like deep-sea djinns who had been summoned by Satan to the mainland, where they had had the curse of desert dryness and hatred put

upon them by the sun. They were, however, in their manner friendly. We started in sunshine—in the company of masses of flies which had settled upon the dates which were our staple food. Amicable black paws broke off clusters of dates, studded with flies like live currants, and handed them to me at intervals.

We sailed out, and after a couple of hours we anchored with two other boats. They prefer, apparently, always to travel in company in this sea below the pirate coast. I was urgent for going on, but I saw their point of view and resigned myself to an interminable oscillatory dawdle. That night, as I lay awake, I heard the Arabs saying that they hoped that Ibn Saud would soon come to Hofuf, or Ojair, and drive the Turks out. "Blessings be upon his head," said they, "so shall we have no customs to pay."

We had an extremely uncomfortable night ; it was very crowded on the poop and a lot of people were sick. The boat was very small, drawing only 4 ft. I did not like the face, manners or language of the captain and offered him a large baksheesh to arrive at Bahrein as soon as possible. There was nothing on the boat to eat and drink but bread, dates, tepid rice and the horrible water of Ojair. We finally anchored off Anghariya. Abu Salaam craved even more than I to stand upon the pearl island ; he moaned like a dog and kept repeating, "It is the sahib's desire." The relations between myself and the captain and crew were much worse upon this boat than upon the one in which I came to Ojair. In the first boat we had had misunderstandings, but no hand was ever laid upon a weapon ; this was not the case on our return journey to Bahrein. I found very little opportunity for sleep, which did not improve my temper.

That night was a night of wrath, but it ended with our arriving late at the village of B'daya, where I was

met by the Sheikh's son and introduced to his father. The other notables also greeted me. "Alas!" said they, "pearl-diving prospers, but the slave trade is dying down. Cannot England, who has always helped the poor, help us in that respect? This was once a grand place for the slave trade."

I galloped across the island in high spirits and shouted with pleasure when I came to the Consulate and saw the familiar, almost domestic sight of Prideaux, sitting among his prisoners tied by the leg. He gave me a great luncheon. Afterwards we went to the funeral of the wife of the missionary doctor, with whom I had taken tea before I left. All the European colony were there, five men and three women, all the Christian Bagdadis and three native converts. Coming back, I passed a half-open grave with red clothes protruding from it: if a woman dies before giving birth to a child, the Arabs believe that the child lives and do not therefore imprison it in a perfectly closed grave.

The Father of Peace blessed the soil of the island as holy ground. He had been in continuous fear for the last week, hating the Turks, dreading the wild men of the mainland, terrified by the crew of the dhow, abominating the storms. He had also felt to the full one of the discomforts which had acutely affected me. The only cigarettes obtainable had been some kind of Persian tobacco rolled in *The Times of India*. These cigarettes cost, I think, a rupee for a thousand, and they gave one the feeling of smoking steel filings. Life in the hinterland, and in Aden itself, had taught Abu Salaam to appreciate the luxury of the Turkish cigarette, and his throat, like mine, revolted at *The Times of India* as a narcotic.

I was invited to a noble feast, where pyramids of rice were brought in on clean straw matting. The Sheikh, occasionally, fed me kindly with his own hand

with titbits. I was very much afraid that he might think a sheep's eye a dainty.

"*Ismak-e ?*" he said—"What is your name?"

"Herbert," said I.

"*Fi harb fi Avropa, Harbart ?*" asked an ancient—"Is there war in Europe, Herbert?"

"Not to-day," said I. "God knows about to-morrow."

"*Min malik Avropa el-an ?*" questioned the ancient—"Who is king in Europe to-day?"

"Europe has many kings, as you have many sheikhs and sultans," I answered. This was a promising opening for a contentious discussion, but the meeting did not take it up.

In a few days' time a British India boat came in, and, saying a sad farewell to the Resident, and a cheerful one to the Father of Peace, I ended my stay at Bahrein.

I went on board the British India boat much recovered by the bracing winter air of the Gulf, and made acquaintance with Captain Dagg, who came from Oporto, and knew my friends the Warres. He asked me if I talked Turkish.

"Down below," he said, "is a Turkish Pasha, a very decent fellow, in the second class. He is bargaining for carpets. I should like to help him; if you talk the language will you come and translate?"

I went below, and there I found Riza—risen, in the estimate of his companions, by his good behaviour and his fine clothes, to the exalted rank of Pasha. He gave me the Albanian greeting, and exclaimed: "Oh, the great ways of God, that thou and I should meet upon these strange seas!"

George Lloyd had paid his fare from Constantinople to Bombay, where he found none who could speak Turkish, Greek, Albanian or Bulgarian. He had, however, repeated my name constantly, until an

"Effendi" had put him aboard Captain Dagg's ship and he had come down the Persian Gulf. He seemed to have been neither distressed nor puzzled, only rather weary of the uncertainties of his journey from Constantinople.

We steamed to Bushire, where Sir Percy Cox invited me to stay with him. He and Lady Cox were extremely kind and urged me to finish my convalescence at their house, but I was anxious to be on my way. I showed Lady Cox, with some pride, my modest travelling equipment of mattress, cooking-pots, etc. When she saw my cooking-pot she gave a loud cry. The plating had been boiled away and both Abu Salaam and I ought, by the laws of nature, to have died from poisoning by verdigris.

Sir Percy Cox had made himself king of the Persian Gulf. He had got the great prestige of the British Empire behind him; that was the foundation of his power, but the architecture of the building which, brick by brick, he had reared himself was his own. He was architect and mason in one. Moderate, cold and vigilant, he was as well acquainted with the character of the various peoples with whom he dealt as were the pilots with the shoals, or the ships' captains with the winds, upon that turbulent sea.

Lord Cromer redeemed Egypt from chaos and gave a people comparative freedom, and all could see how his work had prospered; because the results lay on either side of the Nile. Cox's labours had nothing equivalent to show. His arduous struggles were to prevent cantankerous and clamouring Arabs and Persians shedding each other's blood, and to hold a difficult sea open for our commerce. His work was heroic, thankless and for all his labour there was little to show even on paper.

When Riza and I left that hospitable roof we returned to the boat of Captain Dagg. We had fair

weather as far as Fao. We anchored outside Basra. I was anxious to get ashore and visit the Consulate, and so, against the warning of the Captain, we took an Arab sambuk and rowed up-stream, up the mouth of a river flanked on either side by a great palm forest. The tide swept us in towards the bank. Suddenly I heard a challenge and saw a black soldier a few yards distant, with a rifle pointed at our boat. Hearing him ordering the Arab rowers to halt, I drew my revolver and commanded them to proceed. The Arabs wept piteously; Riza, for once, was greatly averse to force. "Be calm, my two eyes," said he. "Leave this important business to me. Upon my head be it."

He addressed the black man with the rifle as his brother, and after describing my exalted station, made an appeal to be allowed to land near the Consulate. A numerous guard, meanwhile, had come up and we were now covered by their rifles. The Arabs rowed us to the steps of the quarantine station, where I got out, tongue-tied with rage. Before long, however, a boat came from the Consulate. Soothing words were said, and the door of the Lazaretto, which was the place of detention for the unclean, opened to me and Riza. The stricter quarantine was rescinded and we returned to the steamer to pass a few days more with Captain Dagg.

Then being allowed at last ashore, I went to stay at Basra with Mr. Consul Crowe, in whose house I spent a happy week; the only fly in the ointment was Riza's attitude towards the Arab servants and guards. He had addressed the coal-black sentry who proposed to shoot us as "brother and comrade," but it was difficult to bring him to appreciate the better qualities of the Arabs. Where I saw them as picturesque, he saw them as dirty; where I saw them as children of drought, he saw them as rascals. The



coffee of bitter sherds, which they gave him in tiny cups, to him was a mockery of hospitality. Relations between him and them became difficult.

Crowe had gone through the long and thankless service of so many of his profession, but an active interest in his surroundings had kept his mind fresh. He was interested in the language, customs and people. He took Mrs. Crowe and myself on an expedition to the Garden of Eden, where we slept upon a bed of sand that was as soft as any bed I have known. It was not like the place pictured in illustrated Bibles; but it had the loveliness of whispering palms; of the Tigris, a river of gold to the North at sunset; of the Euphrates, silvered under the rising moon.

Basra was an unpretentious outpost of civilisation, obviously diffident about its possible future greatness under Britain. It was the link between the terrible Persian Gulf ("terrible" is the right word) and five hundred miles of precarious river communication with Bagdad. Basra was mainly English. Its future development, pending the settlement of the Bagdad Railway, lay north-east up the Karun River, south down the Gulf, north up the Tigris. Meanwhile, it was an island, and a not comfortable island, socially, politically or economically. The Turk, suddenly galvanised out of lethargy, was pushing a curiously efficient scheme of progress on the Tigris. This was the *Daira es Saniyeh*, known as the Sultan's Company. It aimed, by fair means or foul, at acquiring the Arab lands adjacent to the river, and having done this it was beginning to develop these lands methodically and efficiently, and even to educate the people. There was a barrage of obstruction against the increase of British trade up the Tigris, and we made no progress on the Karun. The cards were all on the table, but the pack had not yet been shuffled for the final deal.

## MESOPOTAMIA

RIZA and I went aboard one of the Lynch steamers commanded by Captain Cowley, who had spent his hard life mainly upon the Tigris. (I met him again when Firman and he went up the Tigris in their attempt to relieve Kut; they were both killed, and received posthumous V.C.s.) I quote from my diary of 1916.<sup>1</sup> Cowley was supposed to have almost a conjugal tie with that river, to know its moods and to be able to prophesy its anger and its treachery. He was as well acquainted with the happy nature of the marsh Arab.

An English lady, with rosy cheeks, fine eyes and an equal trust in Providence and the English language, was a passenger on the *Blosse Lynch*. She proposed to visit all the adjacent areas of interest, and few places were interesting to Miss Chrystal to which civilised man had been before her. It was enough that a virulent type of fever should have killed all inquisitive Europeans, to determine her to investigate the reason and the region—and that without scientific knowledge or technical apparatus. She had only to be told that savage tribes made a festival of the

<sup>1</sup> "This afternoon an Easter service was held on the boat. It was a wonderful sight, the desert covered with our graves, mirages in the distance and the river glowing in the sun. At the end of the service the *Julnar* arrived. Guns sounded while they loaded the *Julnar* and the Black Watch were playing on their pipes. Overhead go the sand-grouse, calling, and the river and the desert winds are sighing. . . .

"I saw old Cowley, an old friend. He is to pilot her. He has been thirty years on this river and is a proper Englishman. He laughed and chaffed with Philip Neville and me on the *Julnar* before she started. Firman was very glad to have the job and felt the responsibility. No cheers were allowed. They pushed off, almost stationary, into the river, that was a glory of light, with the graceful *meheilahs* in an avenue on both sides of it, with masts and rigging a filigree against the sunset. The faint bagpipes and the desert wind were the only music at their going."

death of any foreigner, for her to long to be present at that festivity, even as a solitary foreigner. I had never before met a martyr without a creed who so passionately hunted for death without a particular stake. She claimed me as a brother adventurer, and it was only thanks to subterfuges that I escaped death by miasma in the marshes, or a brief but more exciting end at the hands of some virile, hostile tribe.

Having been left (I believe), in later years, a sum of money, she had at once said good-bye to her native village, where she loved the people, respected the Vicar, and indulged a passion for bees. Armed with innocence and courage, she proceeded to seek adventures more extravagant than those of Don Quixote. I cannot say if she is alive to-day, but if I ever happened to meet her again in a sandstorm in Arabia, I know that she would remind me of the scent and the beauty of an orchard in the West Country.

The alleged orders of my doctor forbade me to accompany her on excursions into the Muntefik country from the river, where at that moment death was the *plat du jour* for such as we, and I hoped that the orders of the Resident at Bagdad, Colonel Newmarch, would prevent other exciting journeys. Miss Chrystal poured contempt on all her past life. It was true that in her comparatively recent odysseys she had already risked death many times, and we were all given to understand that she and her companions (for whom I felt a paternal sympathy) had only escaped because the poor people who attacked them had been so badly armed. She will always remain in my mind as the archetype of courageous British womanhood.

Colonel Newmarch was and, if he still lives, is, no doubt, an eccentric. On the arrival of the *Blosse Lynch* at Bagdad a *kavass* was waiting with a note for me and the usual kind invitation to the Residency. The Resident was an old Indian soldier, anxious

to extend his hospitality; Miss Chrystal also was immediately invited. During dinner we had a curious recital of events that had recently occurred in Bagdad. The Turks had come to the Residency and had said, with an air of superior knowledge, that an Indian sergeant had been murdered and was to be found in a certain well. When the Residency made investigations into the well the body of an old lady was discovered, done to death by the Bagdadis, and the Turks were crestfallen at their mistake.

A few nights later Colonel Newmarch left his room to call a servant. Outside the door he found a *kavass*.

"Where," he said, "is the orderly on this landing?"

"Over there," said the man, "but he is dead."

"Where is the *kavass* downstairs?"

"There," pointing to another corner, "but he is dead too."

"And the man at the door?"

"He is also dead."

Newmarch got tired of this monotonous question and reply, and asked who was alive. He was told that the murderer (one of his own guards) lived, and was at the moment on an adjacent roof. It was still night, but dawn came soon, and Newmarch with some of his retainers made their way up to the roof. He caught sight of the man some forty yards away and walked straight at him with the intention of taking his rifle. At the distance of about fifteen yards, Colonel Newmarch found that the assassin was upon a different roof, divided by an impassable gulf, across which he looked, but could not leap: the Pathan was armed, and Newmarch was not. He ordered him to throw down his rifle, which the man did, and allowed himself to be arrested. All this was the result of a Pathan blood feud.

I had enjoyed the hospitality of Colonel Newmarch, but when he complained of feeling ill his guests, with

tactful alacrity, left his house to take up quarters at the only possible khan in Bagdad.

My health was now restored, and I was anxious to see the holy places of Kerbela and Babylon. I told Riza that, in consideration for his pious feelings, I proposed that we should make a pilgrimage to Kerbela. He appeared less pleased than I expected, but we obtained a carriage and made our plans.

Riza then said to me : "What of that lady ? The lady of the rosy cheeks. She also goes to the Holy Places. She must do so in our company."

I said : "Well, she can't ; she won't do what I tell her, and without that I won't take the responsibility."

"No, no, lord," said Riza. "Not so does the man of honour behave. Surely she must go under our escort."

Now I knew Miss Chrystal and I liked and admired her ; when millions of similar babies were poured from the same mould on to this earth, some different and distinguishing ingredient was put into her soul. But I did not want to be her travelling companion in this very fanatical country round Bagdad, for I was convinced that, whatever happened, she would always want to go just beyond the next range of hills, and always insist upon shaking hands with one maniacal devotee too many. If I did not escort her I was sure that at that season she would not be allowed to travel alone to Kerbela and therefore that all would be well ; so I answered Riza : "With us it is not the fashion for a gentleman and a lady to travel alone."

"This is an error, surely, my dear," he said ; "have I not been in England ?" (There was a reference here to Anne, of whom more later.) "Also at Constantinople ? Surely it is the custom of your country ?"

I then discovered that our two carriages were ordered at 4 o'clock the next morning, and determined to be

late. We should thus arrive separately at Babylon, travelling over a safe road, and I would go on alone to Kerbela.

My faults are many, but unpunctuality on the road is not one of them, and it was with difficulty, and in spite of many protests from Riza, that we started an hour and a half after Miss Chrystal had preceded us. When we came to the gates of Bagdad we found that the faithful Turks had detained the indignant lady until my arrival. There was nothing more to be done, and our two cabs crawled like courting insects across the plain. Miss Chrystal's servants never allowed her to be more than ten yards distant from myself. We lunched together at a poor village, and I saw that her proud and independent spirit was hurt by my unwilling but inevitable chaperonage. That night we arrived at Babylon, where we were entertained by the Germans, whose work seemed admirable, and who were hospitable and kindly men; their only drawback was that they had more love for cats than I. I took the Germans apart and explained that Miss Chrystal and I were not related, and that it was merely an accident of travel that had thrown us together; I saw her hard at work trying, I suppose, to make them understand the same thing. But the minds of those archæologists lived in the past, and when I firmly said good-bye to her the next morning, it produced a painful impression of conjugal desertion. It was at last held by the authorities to be definitely inadvisable for her to go to Kerbela at that fanatical season of Muharram.

At this distance of time I remember little about my journey to Kerbela except the flat plains, the caravans of corpses and the bodies that rested in the Khans on the road to interment in the sacred spot of Kerbela, and the monotonous but dangerous religious ecstasy that was seen in all centres of population.

The journey was not entirely without incident: my horse escaped and defied capture for a time that seemed interminable; its hoofs turned against us in every direction, from whatever quarter we approached.

Early one morning, when the cold was intense, we were riding through a Persian town where the inhabitants had turned out to gaze at us with sad and stolid fanaticism, when an incident which might have caused much trouble took place. I had given my gun to the Christian interpreter to carry, in order to warm my frozen hands. He had the same desire for warmth, and put his hands into his pockets, and cocking his leg over my gun, contrived to let it off. There was a loud bang and a howl; I turned round startled at the noise and saw a wounded dog vanishing away. Had the shot hit one of the sad and fanatical onlookers instead of the pariah, it is, I think, doubtful if any of us would have returned from that expedition.

We could get neither food nor water in these bigoted villages. Riza, the Sunni, was given food on a plate, which the people broke after he had eaten. He was allowed to bring no food to me. At Kerbela I was received by the British Consul, a Persian, but I stayed at the khan. I admired the magnificence of the mosques, but the season was dangerous, for it was the Muharram, and the feast of Hasan and Husain. I saw the Persians weeping for that death twelve hundred years ago as for a loss of yesterday in their own family. The tears ran down their cheeks and they beat their naked breasts, lamenting. It was not a time propitious for the foreigner. I could not pause in the street without a scowling crowd collecting, and at the request of the Consul I cut my stay short and returned to Bagdad, where I was glad to meet Miss Chrystal.

I made many friends in Bagdad, where the English gave strangers a warm welcome. These Englishmen

were the stationary spear-head of our progress, but behind that spear-head was no national drive. The British community, very largely Lynch's firm, were compelled to sit in patience and see their efforts towards improvements thwarted by the Turks, while they waited to be driven back by the slow pressure of Germany. We had a serious dinner where these urgent questions were discussed. It ended festively, and there was a brush with the Arabs, and the Turkish Caracol intervened.

My last days in Bagdad were delightful, for my health had returned. The city was wanting in the exaggerated picturesqueness and the romance that every traveller hopes to find there, but the dresses of the people were beautiful.

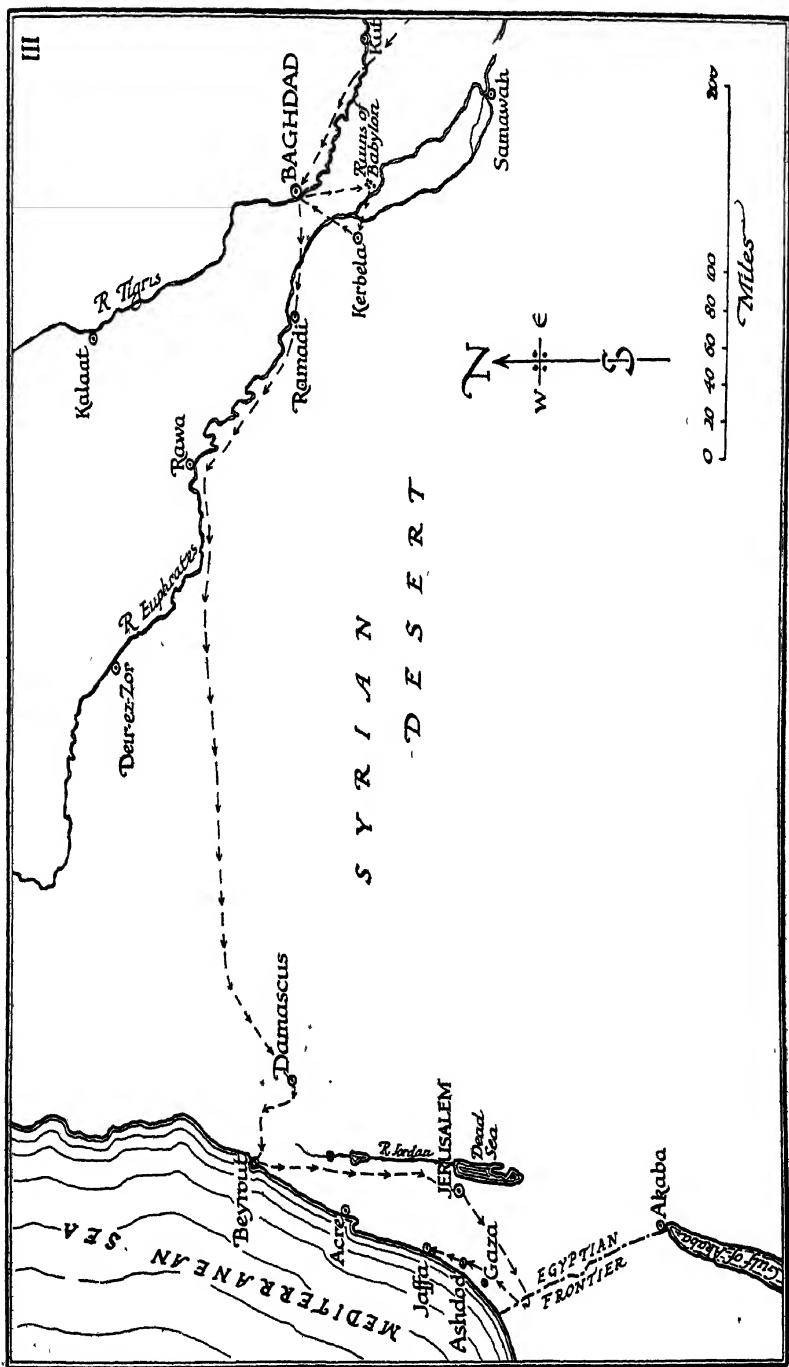
Turkish power, attacked from inside and from outside, was tottering. People needed a guiding hand and administration. The Turks were not injudicious. They left the wild tribes to enjoy their life of freedom and to repudiate the civilisation which depressed their spirits. From the Turkish point of view it was neither politic nor remunerative to attempt to coerce these clansmen. The Turks were wiser in their day than we in our ambitious occupation after the War. Our position in those earlier days in Bagdad was often likened to British control in an Indian State. This was not true. We held a fine and a predominant position, over which the German future cast its shadow without affecting the immediate present; but our influence was local, and it was difficult to get the Porte to move where British interests were concerned in Mesopotamia. The Arabs, on the other hand, were, to a sensible extent, masters of their own fate. What they lacked in power they made up in intrigue; their politicians and administrators had a subtlety that the Turks envied and were unable to rival; Sayyid Talib, one of the principal Arab chiefs, had great



power, which was born of instinct rather than of intellect.

Not long before my arrival, an unpopular Vali ruled in Basra, and Sayyid Talib was anxious that this reign should end. He did not pursue the methods of ordinary men; he did not write to the Porte to complain of extortion, oppression or corruption. He organised a petition to the Government at Constantinople, in which he said that the rumour (which all loyal subjects of the Porte fervently hoped to be false) was current that their beloved Vali, Rifaat Kiazim Pasha, was to be removed from his high position; that Rifaat Kiazim was beloved by all, but his kindness had been especially great and his virtue shone more pre-eminently to his faithful servants and beneficiaries, who, in all humility, implored the beneficent Government not to remove their Lord the Vali, "upon whom be increase." There followed a list of the signatories. It was headed by four well-known murderers, then the owners of hashish dens and the keepers of houses of ill-fame. The Sublime Porte happened to be in a virtuous mood. It read the petition with care and the list of signatories with horror. "Are these the supporters of the man we send to rule Basra?" said the Porte. "Away with him." And the victory was complete for the Lion of Mesopotamia, Sayyid Talib.

The Arab is a Jew on horseback. When accounts have to be balanced he throws the weight of his lance and his gun, as well as the weight of his shekels, into the scales; but to him belong, not the music, but the romance and the artistic passion that are Jewish. He has less of the huckster in him (though quite enough), he is less pedestrian; he remains a cavalier; and his merits have more of the quality of wings. He has got that which the Jews have generally lacked—a keen sense of humour. In the Old Testament,





wit is left out of the Hebrew psychology; cruelty takes its place. Wit and humour may have been suppressed to a large extent in Arab annals, but it is a permanent part of the Arab character. The Arab has a keen sense of the incongruous.

There was the owner of a bathing-booth at Bagdad, who made a fair profit from those who desired to bathe in the river; there was also a fish merchant, who captured an unusually large shark, which he hung up opposite the bathing-house of the proprietor of baths, Abu Kerim, and only consented to take away for a sufficient and regular contribution.

Riza and I left Bagdad for Damascus one windy morning in March. We had with us one muleteer, a sturdy boy, Mahmoud, who rode a tiny donkey; two pack-horses and two horses of our own. We started light-heartedly upon this long journey, having taken very little thought for the morrow. A bag of rice, some liquid Arab butter, a folding chair for me, which we soon burnt to cook our supper, and one pillow, with a number of handkerchiefs and disinfectants, were all our preparations. As evening fell, while we approached the Tigris at Fellahia, I said to Riza, "I am looking forward to dinner, as I am extremely hungry."

"Who is going to cook it?" said Riza.

"You are," said I.

"As you order," said he, "but I have never cooked before."

. . . . .

## RIZA

UP till now in this book I have given an emphatic and perhaps egoistic account of my own experiences, feelings, mistakes and virtues. I have said little of

the man who had shared so much with me on these travels and was in the future to share even more.

The world is full of faithfulness, from that of a general to his king to that of the agricultural labourer who serves his squire, and this fidelity may be stiff, rigid to the death. It may also be admonitory and affectionate. But nowhere, I think, can it have quite the same spirit as on the bond between an honourable Albanian and his master. I know not who said it, but he spoke the truth who asserted that only in Albania could you get a man to serve a stranger for £10 a year, who would without question give his life for his master. In gratitude I devote the greater part of this chapter to Riza, rather than to the events of our erratic and sometimes feverish course from Bagdad to Damascus. I might tell of our horrible night among the wild cats that clawed at our eyes, of the great trouble between Riza and the Arabs when I, with much courage and at great personal risk to myself, saved my own life ; or of the occasion when we both fled from the woman who was possessed by a devil and who was brought to me to cure. But these were all minor, and if not entirely normal, at all events not unexpected incidents, in our casual march. They creep into the story here and again, but Riza is rightly at this point the main theme.

I do not pretend that we did not have differences of opinion that were often acute. What travellers but mental deficients could be perpetually bland to each other when they are assailed by a sandstorm or by fickle and noisy Arabs, or when there are sudden and important decisions to be taken, for which the data are inadequate ?

But our faults, like our forgiveness, were mutual. Riza had a cheerful creed, shared I believe by tourists and trippers in general, though not articulately expressed, that " God does not look at error by the way,"

i.e. that travelling and piety are incompatibles. This formula, (*Allah yolda kussur bakmaz*), was constantly his grace as he shared my breakfast of scented mastic before marching out from a hovel into the darkness that comes before the bitter desert dawn. In his dealings with Arabs he held also, and acted upon, the conviction which also dominated an old English servant of my youth in her dealings with foreigners. "I shout and shout," she used to say, "but they will not understand." Riza firmly believed that in dealing with people whose tongue he could not speak, hulla-baloo was, if not essential to, yet a great ally of, lucidity. Here is a typical scene that recurred in various forms in our march from Bagdad. The presence of the Bey Effendi (myself) was always supposed to have some mysterious effect in sending up the prices, and even when "My Excellency" had not had a bath for a fortnight, nor a change of clothing for as many days, my dazzling appearance (according to Riza) retained its pernicious influence.

SCENE.—*Arab muleteer unloading the horses in a tiny court of mud walls. Effendi, outside a smelly room of plank and wattle, smoking cigarettes and speculating as to whether the menu will contain rice and eggs as usual or rice and eggs and chicken soup. Riza (squatting) absorbed in the same problem. Commotion outside.*

RIZA (*rising*). Hasten, Bey Effendi. Bend down, enter in, hide thyself. Behold, here comes the Lord of the Eggs.

EFFENDI (*mutinously*). Curse the Lord of the Eggs! I will not enter in. It is hot and it smells.

RIZA (*without much conviction*). Brief be thy sojourn, my dear. Upon my head be this business.

(*Effendi enters reluctantly.*)

*The voice of Riza rises in abominable Arabic addressing the Lord of the Eggs, an ancient and decrepit Arab.*

RIZA. O my soul! Behold thy eggs. For four eggs shalt thou have a farthing. A goodly price!

ARAB. Nay, but two farthings.

RIZA. Oh, thou wild one! Is God not One?

ARAB. God is One. Be He exalted.

RIZA (*with devotion*). Be He exalted! If God is One, give me these eggs.

*(Arab, convicted apparently of blasphemy if he drives a hard bargain, hands over the eggs, then makes a snatch at them.)*

Riza, exasperated by this treachery, returns to Turkish and a full-blooded equivalent in that language of "Oh, ancient damnation, thou most wicked fiend."

Indescribable clamour, into which the Effendi bursts from the suffocation of his den, and is ushered to nowhere in particular with much ceremony by Riza, with the result that the extra farthing has to be paid. The evening meal is slightly tinged with a sense of defeat as the expensive eggs are swallowed.

Negotiations did not always end pacifically. At one of the cities of Mesopotamia our supply of small coins had run short; we had spent all of them on the journey, which we had shared with a number of corpses proceeding to their sepulture as travelling companions. While I was dressing, Riza superintended the carrying of our luggage from the room we shared in the pilgrim-packed khan down to the great courtyard, which was filled with blinding chaff, blown by a wild dawn wind. As I walked down the steps my eyes were greeted by the sight of my mountaineer rolling a Persian porter as if kneading dough upon the ground, while the friends of the victim stood round, lamenting and threatening. Much incensed, I told Riza to follow me, and when we had climbed into our carriage I reminded him that the place was holy, and no spot for brawling. "The

place," he answered, "without doubt, is holy. But the people are otherwise. Having no coin, I gave the porter some stockings you no longer require. The — refused them. An honourable gift, truly, to him of naked calves!" Knowing the condition of those "stockings that I no longer required," I felt some sympathy with the Persian.

Riza's father had died in his bed, most unexpectedly, but the *jak*, or blood-feud, has left him the last representative of what was once a well-to-do highland family. When he was in my service a *barishma*, or peace-making, occurred. He was offered the customary blood-money, which is sometimes accepted at certain given seasons of the Sultan's amnesty in lieu of vengeance; but he refused it, though he accepted the olive branch.

Riza Bey and I were first introduced by a Jew-Gipsy, who later absconded with a cheap collection of Government stamps. We walked back to the hotel in silence, as in those days I knew no Turkish and only a smattering of Romaic, or rather a peculiarly vile dialect of that language Riza had forgotten. At the hotel in Salonika, where I was staying, I called in a waiter who knew some French to interpret, and told him to ask the mountaineer not to lose my things. Riza was kneeling down and spoke to the interpreter, watching him with brilliant, restless eyes. "He asks you," said the waiter, "if he forgets anything or fails in his duty, to stab him." This somewhat startling attitude towards myself lost nothing of its originality where my clothes were concerned. It was a joy to me for many days when, after travelling, we returned to civilisation, to watch him dressed in a spotless fustanella, with a jewelled pistol and a scarlet-hilted dagger in his sash, and to hear the rumble of his deep curses, at the meaning of which I could only then guess, as he swore at my evening clothes. These



garments at first filled him with bewilderment, and, when he understood that upon no occasion did a revolver figure as a part of my evening attire, with contempt.

At our first acquaintance, though I was to a certain extent under the glamour of his race, I had had no experience of Albanians. In my future *kavas* I saw a man with a handsome, rather sullen face and glittering eagle eyes. It was not till later that it transpired that he came of a good family, and was a "Bey"—a title of distinction, and not more common than that of "Prince" in Russia. Every man is his own policeman in Albania, though this principle is not, or was not, recognised in places where the Government had a strong position. An "event," the logic of circumstances and a code drove Riza from his town. The consequence of this unfortunate occurrence was a constant grief to him, though it seemed to me that the fact that he was alive, whilst the other chief actor in the incident was not, ought to have been a sufficient consolation. Turkish law was a very uncertain quantity in Albania, but it marked down my highlander, less because he had adhered to the custom of his people than because he afterwards became the *kavass* of a foreigner, who went to odd places with unknown designs. Wandering from his mountain town, that became as inaccessible to him as, with few exceptions, it has been to foreigners, he drifted into several enterprizes and curious adventures.

We met at a critical moment in his life, and he exchanged, for the time at any rate, the chances of guerrilla warfare for trains, England and travel in the Caucasus and Arabia. Together we experienced comfort and gaiety, dirt, temporary penury and many degrees of unpleasantness. A Mussulman, born and bred in a creed of strictest conservancy, Riza brought

a curiously clear and unprejudiced judgment to bear upon the marvels that he saw. In common with many of his people he had an instinct for character. I remember once in Japan an inquiry by a native on these lines : So-and-so, having borrowed much money, has gone ; We do not know where he has gone ; He says he is a "gentleman." What is a "gentleman" ? My highlander was never in any doubt as to who had a claim to that title. On one occasion our luggage had gone astray in England, but the station-master promised to make every effort to let me have it immediately. Riza asked me to interpret the following dubious praise to this official, to whom he had taken a fancy. " Say to him, Bey Effendi (for the man is a good man), that though his indiscretion has allowed our baggage to go with the multitude (God give him trouble), say to him, such is Humanity." During his stay in England every Sunday afternoon was given up to teaching a British baby Turkish. His friends were many, and his courteous manners endeared him to all. Afterwards I was often at a loss to answer questions about the numerous people of different classes who had been kind to him. " When I was a guest in your house, Effendi, observing the laws of hospitality (God give you plenty), there was Anne, a maid of education. Such a one was Anne, by God, verily such a one, God make her eyes radiant, she admired me greatly. How fares she ? " It was not always easy to answer these rather intimate questions about ladies' maids. His affection for his many friends was sometimes the child of vanity, but always sincere and honourable. He took very easily to a life that was so new to him.

There were two incidents that struck him as familiar, and so made him feel at home. I left him to follow with a friend who was late to a covert which we were shooting, without, however, explaining to him first

what was happening. As the two walked up the wood a gun went off, and some falling shot pattered round them; Riza dragged my friend into the cover of a hedge, and drawing his revolver eagerly hunted for the ambush. On another occasion I sent him out to track some ponies that had wandered away. This he did, armed to the teeth, in all the savage finery of his native dress, letting off his revolver, and at full gallop through the village, which has hardly recovered from the shock to this day. On the first occasion when he loaded for me, I was horrified to see him beheading the wounded birds with an enormous dagger, while a mutter ran down the ranks of the startled beaters. He did not, however, care for the shooting of the "birds of luxury" (pheasants), as he afterwards admitted when we were marching in the desert.

When we journeyed from Bagdad to Damascus there was generally only one room for the two of us at the *noktas*, or guard-houses, and sometimes that was shared by a crowd of Arabs, whom Riza loathed. What he chiefly missed was the companionship and *muhabet* (pleasant conversation) which Albanians love. On these marches one grows to like the silence of the desert, hardly broken, and yet modified, by the perpetual rustle of the sand as the wind stirs it, and one finds in it an attraction that daily increases. There were days when we hardly spoke, as it was my habit to ride ahead of the caravan at a distance that made the long, trailing songs that the Arabs chanted sound pleasant to my ears. So, to cheer his spirits, we used to talk before sleeping, each in a different corner of a dirty room, about the habits of our respective people. Sometimes, it is true, Riza, who had much of the poet in him—though he always said that he who fought with life had no time for making songs—used to compose ballads, or sing the poems of other men.

I have thought it worth while to give the translation of one of the Albanian songs, which, for my benefit, he turned into Turkish.

#### THE STORY OF SEMANGHELLINA AND THE MAD-BLOODED YOUTH

Once upon a time there was an old Turk who owned a beautiful horse. This horse was without peer in the country, and the price his master required for him was three hundred lira, which no man could be found to pay. But on a certain day there came to the Lord of the horse a Deli Kanlu, a mad-blooded Youth, who said: "Behold thy servant! I am a Moslem of good lineage, verily a follower of the Prophet, and I am honourable also. Yet poverty abides with me, and there is nought I can offer for the horse. But if your High Presence will give the horse to me, I will ride into Serbistan (Serbia), and that which I win there shall be your gain." And the Lord of the horse pondered for a while, stroking his beard, and he said: "Good! So be it." And glad of his consent the mad-blooded Youth rose up and mounted, and rode into Serbistan. And after a time he came to the capital of the country, and while he was seeking for a khan he passed before the eye of the Kral (King) of Serbistan, who stood upon the *shahnashin* (balcony) of his palace. And while he was tending the horse there came a messenger commanding him to attend at the *seray* (palace). Now, when the King asked him the price of the horse, the Youth answered that it was nine hundred lira. And the King was sorely disappointed and called his councillors together. The elders did not deny that the horse was without an equal, but they affirmed also that the price was too great and that the people could not pay it. And the King was grieved. But there was an ancient

Greybeard who sought the favour of the King, and he proposed a cunning plan, a trick of knaves. "We can," said he, "take this mad-blooded Youth by guile, by the wile of love shall he fall. When the King speaks with him to-morrow let the pretty girls attend, and surely his heart will go out to one of them, and so he will abate the price of the horse." And on the morrow the Youth saw before the noon was hot the pretty girls of Serbistan, as he rode in the *maidan* (park), yet was his heart cold, though it was otherwise with some of the maidens. One girl, indeed, fell sick through love of him. So the council of the elders mocked the Greybeard, and the King was scornful to him when the plan miscarried, and it was apparent to all that he had lost the King's favour which he sought. Then the Greybeard strove hard to stand in a position of merit before his lord. "Verily," he said, "the intention of the plan is good, yet not sufficient. The mad-blooded one is a very devil. Let him, however, catch but one glance of Semanghellina, the King's daughter, and he will abate the price of the horse. This is fate." And after debate, the King agreed to this, and the next day he sat outside the *seray* with his daughter beside him. And at noon the Youth came once more to show the beauty of the horse. And as he rode into the open space before the *seray* his eyes met the eyes of Semanghellina, his heart went out to her, and surely their spirits at that moment were one. And the girl went forward to stroke the horse and stood apart, while the mad-blooded Youth looked down at her face. Then he told her quickly somewhat of his contract with the merchant of Ipek, and of how he would gain nine hundred lira. Semanghellina looked up at him, and she said: "O my two eyes, O my soul! O splendid to behold! In my father's palace I have a cloak all embroidered with gold, and in it there are nine pockets, and in

each pocket there is such an amount of gold, and besides this I have also a golden cup. Surely the noontide sun is hot. Make complaint of the heat, cry out and feign sickness, that I may bring water." And the Youth swayed in the saddle as he looked at Semanghellina's face, and called for water. Then the Greybeard declared privately that there was much advancement in the plan. The King's daughter entered into the palace and came again clad in the cloak of gold, and in her hand the cup of gold, which was full of water. And the Youth leant down and lifted her swiftly on to the horse in front of him, and he took the cup of gold, dashing the water into the dust at the hoofs of his horse. Then with full reins he galloped out of the town. The scabbards of all the lords gave up their swords, the stables were emptied of their steeds, but all those that followed him returned disconsolate, for none could vie with the horse. And the sorrowful Greybeard received many stripes in retribution for this misfortune. But Semanghellina and the Youth rode on. All the way was beautiful, and they counted the stages of their journey by streams of clear water and by the banks of flowers where they tarried. One day, by a brook into which the sun was shining, they fell silent, when suddenly the Youth cried: "A curse upon the horse, and a curse upon my journey!" And when the girl asked him the reason of his sorrow, he told her of how he had promised to the old Turk that what he won should go to the master of the horse. And she answered: "What news is this? For thou didst not win me, for it was I, a king's daughter, who gave myself up to a stranger, trusting him. Now, behold the hospitality of summer, and look upon the glory of this valley. Here, or in those hills that are near to us, shall be our abiding-place, and you, as is fit, shall be leader of the strong men that will gather round."

But he said : " Not so. For thus it is that infidels act. Oh, my dear, I have sworn. God bring trouble upon that day." Then they went along silently, and hastened their journey, for there was a young moon. And when they slept the drawn sword of the Youth was between them. And at the end of the travel, at Ipek, they found that ancient merchant, and the Youth said to him : " Greeting, my father. May you never be less. I have ridden into Serbistan, and according to our contract I bring you back that which I won with the horse. Behold a cup of gold, a scarlet cloak embroidered with gold and with many liras in it, more than the price you asked for the horse ; and here, too, I bring you this maiden, a flower with the dew upon it, and a king's daughter, whom I love." That wise old merchant pondered, stroking his beard. And he said : " In truth you are a good Moslem, and you have done well. The cloak shall be mine and the cup shall be mine, and mine, too, the gold. But take thou the horse and the maiden too." And he gave the mad-blooded Youth also a portion of the gold.

Riza had a very good voice and used constantly to sing this ballad, with other snatches, as the day's journey was ending, if there had not been trouble with the Arabs and he was in a good temper. Trouble, however, in one form or another, in trifling ways, was constantly occurring. Like other " Arnauds " (Albanians), he was a curious mixture of kindness and something akin to brutality. One day we passed a man driving a few sheep and some lambs. Riza picked up one of these tiny creatures and carried it on his saddle. A few minutes after this some natives complained that they had been robbed by Bedawin, who were still in sight and cut off from escape by a corner of the river. Much as it must have annoyed

him, he did not indulge in the exhilarating chase to which my escort and I gave ourselves up, and when we returned with our prisoners he was crooning to his pet :

“ Wilt thou come with me to Prisrend,  
Come with me and leave thy dam ?  
There are cypresses in Prisrend,  
There is pasture for a lamb.”

The escort beat the thieves most unmercifully, and after a time I interfered and let them go. They were delighted, and began trying to kiss my hands and outlying parts of my horse. Everybody else, the Persian merchants, and casual Arabs travelling with us for protection, resented my action keenly, as did the Albanian. “ You have care,” said I, “ for a lamb, be charitable also to these people.” “ That is another bill, Excellency. Behold these ——. Behold this lamb. Surely God builds the nest of the blind bird.”

We had one day of rather painful thirst. I have always accustomed myself not to drink upon the march. But upon this occasion the day was extremely hot, and we had a seventeen hours’ journey, instead of the ordinary eleven hours. Half-way through I discovered that the bottle had leaked and we had no water. Early in the morning I had told Riza the tale of David, and how, when his three captains brought him water, he had poured it out upon the sand, saying : “ Shall I drink the blood of my people ? ” He was extremely pleased with this story, which he applauded loudly, saying : “ Finely done. Thus will a king and a man act.” His attitude towards King David underwent a rapid change after a few hours of thirst, and he finally spoke of him with some bitterness, when he discovered that the bottle had leaked until it was empty. It was a singularly unpleasant day ; hot and



airless, except when a column of sand rose in a spiral on a puff of wind to come straight at us from whatever quarter it started, Riza repeated monotonously: "God give this desert trouble." The inventor of Bovril and all his processes could hardly have extracted more moisture from the halves of a chicken that were our food for the day, than did we by our relentless chewing. After about fifteen hours' march we came to a stinking green puddle, and the diameter of its stagnation was about a yard. The Arabs flung themselves down like an uncouth crowd of gnomes, and sucked it up as the sun set, while the Albanian prepared to follow their example. I told him to remember David, and how he refrained from good water, while in this there was disease and perhaps death. "I," he said, "am not as his Excellency the Imans Daud. Death is the comfort of the poor man. I will drink." He was dissuaded with some difficulty. It would be hard to imagine greater luxury than the end of our journey brought with it—long, long draughts of camel's milk—or the contentment of waking next morning and seeing well-filled water-bottles within reach.

Our horses were on this march a source of much trouble. Mine saw too well, and that of Riza hardly at all. A vivid recollection comes to me of a dust-storm. As I write I can hear Riza thumping his horse with his rifle; the animal constantly stumbled and sometimes fell, and Riza's voice, in the midst of the blinding sand-fog into which we had wandered away from the track and our caravan, in a crescendo of shrieks: "Ah! blind, blind, blind! God give you trouble!" while, half-suffocated, I called to him to be more gentle. My own beast was perfectly sure-footed, but was troubled with a romantic eye, which persistently transfigured every object, from a camel to a palm-tree in the distance, into the likeness of an

Arab mare, which he always flattered himself was his affinity. In spite of constant disappointment his hope remained indomitable, and the desire to ingratiate himself made his paces extremely rough. After each disillusionment there followed a short period of peace, when he walked with an affectation of indifference until some new phantom of delight excited him again. As a consequence of this vanity I walked a great deal, a habit to which Riza has never grown reconciled. The man who goes on foot is a vagabond to the Turk of all classes, from the Pasha to the muleteer. After a time we compromised, and I rode, in accordance with my dignity, in and out of the villages, and behaved like a tramp only in the safe solitude of the desert, when it could not be cast in my teeth.

Always when the time came for us to separate I found that Riza had treasured every incident in his memory when his service had not been satisfactory to himself, and for these he asked my pardon. Constantly his penitence was misplaced, and it was rather I who should have pleaded guilty, with extenuating circumstances.

There was another day, the very opposite of our thirsty march, but only in a less degree profoundly discouraging. The wind that usually heralded our start at dawn became a hurricane, and only died down after seven hours. Then rain fell in sheets. The reins slipped through my fingers ; my leather breeches felt like a dress of live eels ; the desert became a bog ; froth, slime, wetness, pervaded everything. I had marched far ahead of my caravan with a Persian, who was accompanied by a baggage animal of his own, and consequently when night fell, adding darkness to our other discomforts, we found that we were hopelessly lost. We discovered a monument, which might have been a joy to an antiquarian, but left us as cold as

itself. After an industrious circle we discovered the same monument again, with even less satisfaction than upon the first occasion. The Persian wailed like a ghou! for a certain Arab who was supposed to know the desert ways perfectly, but who at the moment was unknown miles away with the caravan. Meanwhile the wind grew again, till every inch of clothing seemed like an icy sticking-plaster. As we were helpless, I suggested that we should leave things to the instinct, or intelligence, of the horses, who seemed as depressed as ourselves, and as anxious to alter their forlorn condition. "What should they know," answered my companion, "they who are Persian subjects?" At last we met an Arab who guided us, and from whom we inquired about our caravan. "God," he said, "(I sing His praise) knows where the caravan is. It has wandered in the desert." It seemed, however, to have wandered to rather more purpose than ourselves, since we found it had arrived before us. Riza was overwhelmed with joy after anxiety, and would have delivered an impassioned harangue on the iniquity of separation on a journey among Arabs, but I would not listen. Even when he had ejected half a dozen kids and many fowls from some kind of a shed, we were not at the end of our trouble. It was little use changing our clothes, since everything was soaked through, and even this discomfort did not carry with it the one advantage that I had always associated with dampness, that of being an effective substitute for Keating's Powder. Our Arab mattresses were of an age to have chaperoned any English four-post bed, and their aristocracy of parasites far the most remarkable which we had met. Mahmoud, my muleteer, and a connoisseur in fleas, declaimed, before falling into a troubled sleep, with the eloquence of Shibli Bagarag, against our persecutors.

From this day on our worries ceased, and our march to Damascus was undiluted pleasure.

It was not strange after such vicissitudes that we revelled in the beauty and the deliciousness of our last day's journey. In the evening we rode through flocks of sheep, with tinkling bells, and past children bathing on the outskirts of the villages, and reached rest, and cups of foaming milk, and clean mattresses, and rooms where we slept alone, without the crowd of garlic-eating Arabs which had so often made the nights in the *noktas* detestable. The motley gang of followers who had attached themselves to us for protection sang with pleasure as we passed through friendly olives, and through gardens red and white with almond and peach blossoms and gay with running water. *Semanghellina*, and a song which began : *Deniz dalghasiz olmaz, minni, minni, mashallah!* ("The sea cannot be without waves, darling, darling. Praise be to God!"), and other tunes, were, with scented winds, our companions on the way.

It was not till some days later that I discovered that Riza had been in considerable pain from toothache during this time. One night in Damascus his words were indistinguishable, as he had just had five teeth extracted. His cheerfulness was unimpaired. The day was a good day, the teeth had undoubtedly been bad teeth and the operator (who, I believe, was not a dentist) was a man of education. "Praise be. *Allah rahatluk versin*. May God give you rest. (Good-night.)"

## DAMASCUS

OUR entry into Damascus was most impressive. We brought the desert and its atmosphere with us, as Spaniards their sombreros. I rode at the head of the

procession upon my speckled dobbin horse, who put on his finest air of gallantry for the admiring spectators. Riza, guard and councillor, stayed jealously behind me in order to keep the Persian merchant in his place among the humble and the unpretentious, and to prevent his riding by my side. Here for a moment I must digress to speak of the Turkish language, most dear to those who have studied it, and an unforgettable acquaintance to amateurs like myself. In Turkish, "etc." is expressed in a curious and amusing way. If one wants to inquire, "Have you got the horses and the rice for the journey, and is everything ready?" you ask, "Have you the horses-morses, and the rice-mice?"—meaning horses and saddles and food and cooking utensils. In order to avoid the details of a category, the Turks repeat the chief word in a rhyme, which must begin with *m*. I once heard a description of a banquet translated into this comic French by a Circassian Pasha. "Mon cher, c'était vraiment un grand dîner; il y avait des princes-minces et des barons-marrons."

The rich Persian was beside himself with happiness, and with jubilant grimaces indulged himself in the tunes of his country and in exuberant grammatical formations. "Ah, joy, Bey Effendi. Here is everything," he cried, "wine-mine, cognac-mognac. Blessed has been our journey. Look at the roses-moses and the shops-mops."

The poor pedestrian Persian, of whom the merchant had once said, when I protested on his behalf, "Don't be distressed about Ahmed Ali. He sleeps anywhere and lives on anything," had by a supreme effort borrowed or stolen a donkey, on which he rode with pride, while a long nondescript walking queue, ending with the Turkish military escort, brought up the rear. We arrived famished at the best hotel, where,

in spite of the protests of Riza, I gave away all the remaining money that I had (except one dollar) to Mahmoud, the muleteer, the poor Persian and their companions ; and made a speech which was cheered by them and a number of sympathetic onlookers who knew nothing of our history and circumstances.

For three weeks we had been tanned by the sun and stung by the wind, sand and rain. Our clothes were generally fastened with string. To the face of Riza the sand had added an Arabian to an Albanian fierceness. With his gun slung over his shoulder he marched before into the ordered quietness of the dining-room. I followed, as well armed as he, and with no greater look of polish. There I sat down, and, penniless and unknown, ordered a royal luncheon. Silence, that was at least partly a respectful stillness, fell upon the room. Luckily for me, Edmonds, our Consul, who never forgot that spectacle, was there. He backed my name upon a piece of paper for all the money that I wanted, and for three days I revelled in luxury and baths. I soon grew tired of these and looked back upon my bathless journeys in Yemen and Iraq with tolerance.

In unseemly garments (till others could be procured), I was fêted and treated to the hospitality of this city which enchanted me. Doors flew wide ; favours fell fast and light as the almond blossom of the season. I dined in stately Syrian rooms and walked in hospitable gardens. After the desert, the world of Damascus had all the blandishments of Capua. Every hour brought new acquaintances and friends, as naturally as the winds carried fragrance ; I had never seen the urbanity of the East mingle so sweetly with the initiative of the West. Moslems and Christians discussed their mutual pleasures with wit, their disagreements with serenity. Later, in recollection of a particular incident I wrote these verses :

## DAMASCUS GATE

She went to bargain in the city,  
And passed a beggar by her gate,  
And he was wretched, so from pity  
She gave, because his need was great.

And it was like her, that she gave  
In charity without a thought  
A coin of gold, for "gold can save"  
(She said) "what gold has never bought."

The beggar followed where she went ;  
Forgot his hunger for a star,  
And when at last, her money spent,  
She could not buy in the bazaar,

He said, "Take back your gift, I pray ;  
Do me this honour, once my due."  
She bought with it red silk and grey,  
And that was very like her, too.

"A rose-red city half as old as time," was written of Petra, for that is the wonderful colour of its walls ; in springtime this might almost as truly describe Damascus. Is it a city in a garden or is it a garden in a city ? Everywhere red of almond blossom and of roses, while the town itself challenges the antiquity of Petra. There were beautiful covered streets that have since been burned, better bazaars than at Constantinople and delicious coffee to drink. The people were grave, mild-mannered and very courteous to strangers.

At last Riza and I took our departure for Beyrout, where the people have not the charming manners of the peach gardens of Damascus. Then I met George Lloyd, on leave from Constantinople. I proposed to him that, like the early Christians, we should share all things in common, explaining that it was my part to do the sharing, as I was penniless, unknown, and I thought not liked in Beyrout, and I had no cheque-

book. After an argument, in which I refused to accept daily and limited pocket-money, like one of Mr. W. W. Jacobs's seamen, a sufficient amount was produced, and we went to Jerusalem, where, in that year, the Latin and the Greek Easter fell upon the same day.

My friend and I shared the same feelings of sorrow, anger and respect in the Holy City. Once with another Englishman we attended a sacred ceremony at the Holy Sepulchre. The Turkish soldiers, in a thin line, kept back congested Christianity by dropping the butts of their rifles on the feet of those who pressed forward ; thus a lane was opened for the Greek priests, who passed chanting, swinging censers and sometimes scattering drops of Holy Water. A Turkish soldier near me received this uncongenial baptism. He drew back, laughed, swore and spat.

"That," said our companion, "makes me feel like a crusader."

"I understand that," said I, "but if these people, the Greeks and the Armenians, did not hate each other more than they hate the Turk, they would not need to be guarded by the Turks." George Lloyd said nothing to this.

Easter is always wonderful in the Holy Land, but more than usually so when the Latin and the Orthodox festivals come together, for then the followers of the Founder of the Religion of Love quarrel over His memory. There were free fights between Latins, Greeks and Armenians, fights in which the Turks interfered to save lives and restore order. Once, going alone to the Holy Sepulchre, I found myself in the centre of two contending groups, who were beating each other with crosses, sticks and any weapon that came handy. The Turkish captain, sitting aloft and aloof above the tumult, sent a few soldiers into this fight, and I was pulled out of it and put up beside



him, where we talked. He was a man of long military experience and covered with scars, and he spoke of his many battles.

At last I said to him, "If it isn't a rude question, how did you lose your eye?"

"Ah," said he, "that was no honourable scar. I lost my eye doing what I sent my men to do for you to-day, preventing Christians from killing each other."

George Lloyd and I went to the Miracle of the Holy Fire. We were taken into the Holy Sepulchre, up to a gallery, and a long wait ensued while darkness began to fall. The crowd was so dense that if a man was able to raise himself on to a neighbour's back, he could walk along a pathway of shoulders. At last the Miracle of the Holy Fire occurred. There was a trickle of flame from the centre of the building. The tremendous audience that had disappeared in the darkness of the night was suddenly illuminated. Men and women kissed the Holy Fire, they washed their babies' faces with it, they put it into cages to take back to Siberia and to Tiflis. The patience and the devotion of these poor pilgrims from dim and distant places knew no limit. Below us the church became a lake of light, from which execrable fumes ascended. The congregation glorified God and gave Him ecstatic flame worship. "May the fire purify their souls; water will never cleanse their bodies," said a scornful Levantine companion. But to me, the Miracle of the Holy Fire, false though its title be, made a great impression. It is a trick and not a miracle, but it inspires a rapturous devotion which is wholly foreign to the torpor of Greek Orthodoxy.

Jerusalem, while we were there, was all the world to us, but outside political events had been moving rapidly. There was trouble between ourselves and the Turks, who, it was alleged, had moved the landmarks on the Turkish Egyptian frontier. George

Lloyd and I had determined to ride to Egypt, and this diplomatic strife affected our journey. I had been at the Embassy at Constantinople; he was then at the Embassy. It was obviously very undesirable that any man immediately connected with British officialdom should be held up on the frontier that was in dispute between Great Britain and Turkey. My case was simpler than his. I had belonged to the Embassy, but was now a free man very anxious to use his freedom. We made arrangements in Jerusalem that a telegram should be sent to us at Gaza to inform us of what had happened. If the news was bad, George Lloyd was to return at once to the coast and go on to report at Constantinople. I, who had resigned from the Embassy, was free to do as I chose. I had told Riza at Beyrout to return to Constantinople and await my coming there. I foresaw inevitable trouble between Riza and George Lloyd's enormous Armenian, a fine and a brave man, with the courage of a caged lion, for both were born to rule. We travelled very happily to Gaza, through Ashdod. It was a day's journey, and we were very hospitably received by Mr. Stirling, who was missionary at that place. He was a big and fearless man, wrapped up in his work, with no doubts on any point. He daily received a crowd of halt, maimed and blind, whom he examined and, if it was possible, healed, without making any charge. The only condition of their treatment was that they had to listen to his sermon first. Preaching was the price of physic. Personally, I felt that if the parts had been changed, and that if I was a Christian suffering from severe earache, I should not have felt inclined to take a more favourable interest in the creed of the Desert Prophet while one of his followers preached his gospel and delayed to heal my suffering.

The telegram for which we had arranged arrived.

It told us that we had given the Turks an ultimatum, which, if it was not accepted, would mean war in twenty-four hours. Immediate action became necessary. It was imperative that George Lloyd should get as far from the disputed frontier as possible; he left at about five in the afternoon. I obtained the services of a couple of Arabs and started about the same time. We went a circuitous route, avoiding the Turkish lines, which we passed at nightfall. We were riding steadily through very high grass with a faint moon shining in the sky, when suddenly there were a rustle and cries all round us. I thought that my guides had led me purposely into a warring tribe of which I had heard at Gaza, and made what preparations I could, when suddenly all was peace. There were cries of salaam. The men who pursued us were joined by others who had come from Gaza and said that the Turks had discovered my flight and had taken the harems of my two Arabs as guarantees. "Back we go to Gaza," said the two Arabs. "Not so," said I. I had no intention of going back to Gaza and being arrested there by the Turks with the charge of having been spying on the frontier: "We will go back to Jaffa." The Arabs groaned like camels and declared the journey impossible, but agreed to leave Gaza on the flank and proceed to Ashdod; we rode on and on all through the weary night. At dawn we arrived at Ashdod, where I found George Lloyd, who, with his huge Armenian, had been lost all night. Their relations with their driver, who, I was convinced, had been taking hashish, were of the worst. An accident had happened to the carriage as I met them in Ashdod, one of the wheels having sunk into some soft mud. We were unable to move the carriage, and the driver, looking savagely and contemptuously at us, refused to help. Remembering Kinglake's words that one condition of travel in the East

is unpleasant but inevitable, and that is bullying, I struck the man. It was not the hard blow such as one Englishman would give another in a fight, but it was more rough than a clap on a friend's shoulder. The driver gave a loud roar, leapt to his whip and proceeded to try and break my head with the butt end of it. George Lloyd and the Armenian sprang between us, everybody talking at once. Women came out of their houses, and the widows of Ashdod were loud in their wail. The driver was calmed, new horses were procured and we started on our frontier journey to Jaffa.

Before we arrived, towards the evening, we were met by half a dozen Turkish cavalrymen who were puzzled to know if we were, or were not, prisoners. They were, however, friendly and civil, and they were pleased to smoke our cigarettes. At Jaffa, George Lloyd was most anxious that we should wear a careless air of bonhomie, like tourists returning from a picnic. "You shave," he said to me, "and look as spruce as you can when the Consul comes to see us." I was dead with sleep and threw myself on to my bed, taking the precaution to lock the door, so that the blows of the Armenian were unavailing. "He sleeps like iron," said George Lloyd's servant truthfully. From there we went to Egypt, where Lord Cromer was anxious to hear the news of Constantinople from Lloyd and of Yemen from myself.

Our journey then took us to Constantinople. There was, however, an unfortunate incident that brought a cloud upon our friendship. Our cabin was haunted by a horrible smell. The future Governor of Bombay declared that my servant Riza had packed a dead mouse in my bag, while I told him that it was his Armenian who had failed to wash his clothes for a long period of time. In the end we discovered the truth: a cargo of onions had been packed beneath our cabin.

At Smyrna we decided to go our separate ways. Mine took me to the Consulate-General, where I was welcomed. "But what," said the Consul-General, "has become of George Lloyd?"

I did not like to explain that we had had a temporary disagreement. "Poor George," said I, "he is much better; but they still think it wiser for him not to move about."

At that moment he was announced. "Mr. Lloyd," said the Consul-General, "why have you left your bed?"

George Lloyd knew that I had said something, but could not guess what, and could give no apposite answer to this question.

Constantinople I found more lovely than I had ever known it, and Kinglake's words in all their beauty came back to me: "Venice strains out from the steadfast land, and in old times would send forth the Chief of the State to woo and wed the reluctant sea, but the stormy bride of the Doge is the bowing slave of the Sultan—she comes to his feet with the treasures of the world—she bears him from palace to palace—by some unfailing witchcraft, she entices the breezes to follow her, and fan the pale cheek of her lord—she lifts his armed navies to the very gates of his garden—she watches the walls of his Serail—she stifles the intrigues of his ministers—she quiets the scandals of his court—she extinguishes his rivals and hushes his naughty wives all one by one."

The Bosphorus had never seemed to me so blue, nor the little white birds, the followers of the wind, so swift, nor the Judas trees so bright. We were well received, though a little critically, at the Embassy, and I went up to see an old friend of mine, a Moorish fortune-teller, who predicted dreadful things. As I left, I heard a man chanting the auctioneer's cry. He was trying to sell a little girl of six; she was a fair

child and was crying. I felt very sorry for her and inclined to buy her, though I foresaw difficulties, and I should have been compelled to buy a nurse too. While these reflections were passing through my mind, a Turkish lady, whose *yashmak* did not hide her kind face, came up and bought the child, who seemed happy.



## PART IV

ALBANIA

A RIDE TO USKUB

SANJAK OF NOVI-BAZAR

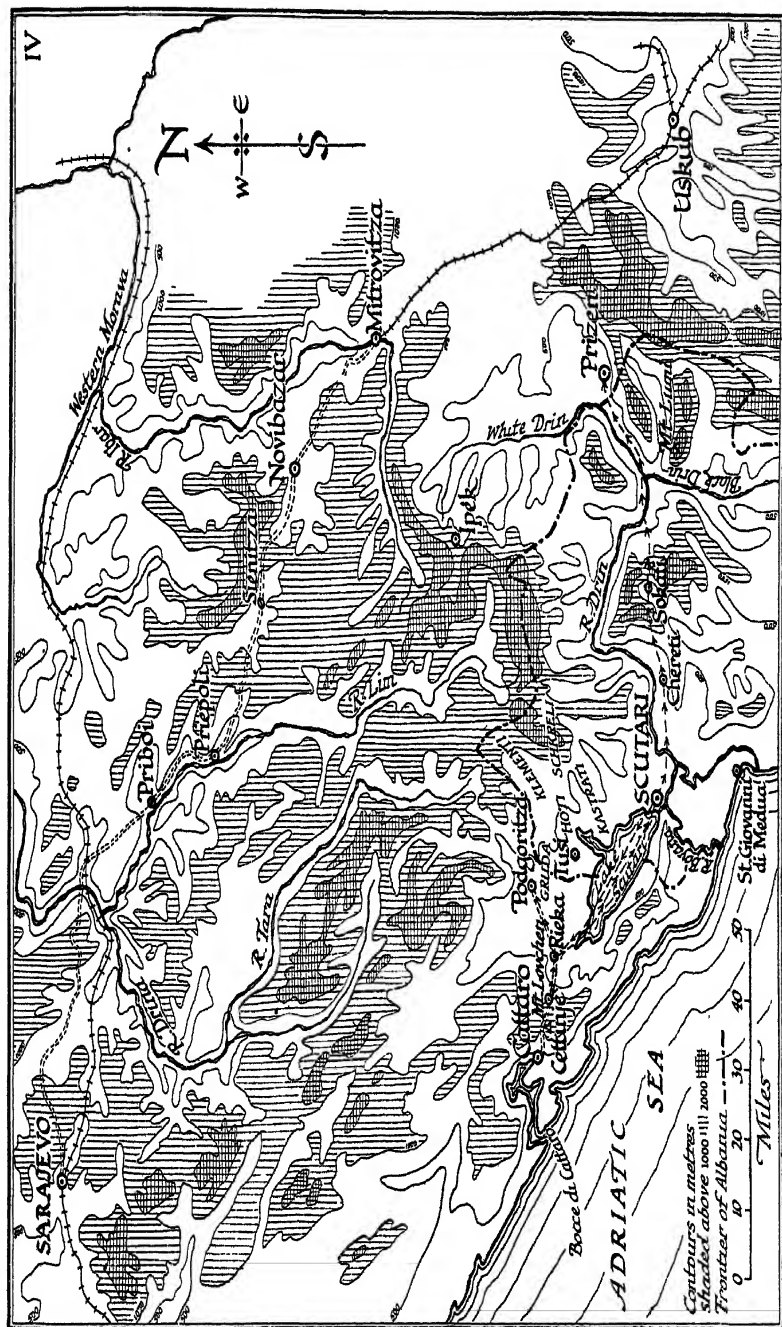
ALBANIAN COMMITTEE

HOTI AND GRUDA

VALONA AND THE SOUTH









## PART IV

### ALBANIA

THERE is a curious analogy between the recent history of the two small countries Ireland and Albania, and between their relations to the larger Empires of which they have been a part, a menace and a support. These two small countries are poor, while the Empires to which they belonged are rich ; they begin with a bog and they end with a slum ; they are inhabited by people whose history is the history of factions, whose private quarrels give rise to civil war and whose creeds are conflicting. In both cases they have contributed something to the larger unit, sometimes acting as cement and sometimes as dynamite ; they have hurt and they have helped. Ireland has more than once joined our enemies, and she has also given us some of our best soldiers ; she has wrecked our Constitution, and produced great British statesmen ; and she has threatened the British Empire, at least as violently and as dangerously as France or Germany has ever done. Albanians have been responsible for most of the reforms that have occurred in recent Turkish history ; the Ottoman Empire has owed some of its chief statesmen and generals to that race ; and Albania has sent her children abroad to play important parts in foreign lands. Crispi boasted of his Albanian descent ; General Cadorna's chief of staff kept the knowledge of his native tongue ; Admiral Koundouriotis, like many of the prominent Greeks, is a Hellenised

Albanian; the immediate ancestors of the present Egyptian dynasty had their homes in Epirus.

Through the din of factions and the turmoil of feuds that have distracted both countries, Albania has preserved her territories for her own people. To preserve intact the resources of her land, Albania consented to pay the heavy price of remaining barren and mediæval, while steam and electricity were giving the appearance of modern civilisation to her neighbours.

It was on these terms of defiance on the part of the Albanians, and of acquiescence on the part of the Turks, that Turkish and Albanian interests (until the Turkish Revolution) met and agreed. What was a self-denying ordinance to Turkey, was delayed profit to Albania. The Turks wished to keep the Albanians like savage watch-dogs ready to fly at the throats of the enemies of the House of Osman, and for this purpose the Porte was always willing to make concessions to the whims or the necessities of the *Arnauts* (Albanians).<sup>1</sup>

"We will have no roads," said the Albanians, "in our country, for roads mean conquest and exploitation and disinheritance."

"Very well," said Constantinople, "there shall be no roads."

"Neither will we have conscription," said the Albanians very firmly, "for we are all born free, whether we are Catholics or Orthodox or Moslems."

To this also the Porte consented, and Albanians in numbers joined the Turkish Army as volunteers.

"We will have no Turkish judges," declared the Albanians.

"Now that," said the Porte, "is going too far ;

<sup>1</sup> *Arnaut*. The name Albanian appears in Greek as *Αρβανίτης* or *Αλβανίτης*, in Turkish as *Arnaut*. The national designation is *Shkypetar* or *Skipetar*, derived from a word signifying "eagle." See Sir Charles Eliot, *Turkey in Europe*, page 351.

this is a question that touches high statecraft. Accept this compromise. Let there be Turkish judges, and we promise that they shall judge no man."

"Agreed," said the Albanians.

The Old Régime in Turkey was prepared to countenance liberty, licence and to approve anarchy in Albania, which at times was a useful servant, and it may be fairly said that Turkish law ran nowhere in those mountains, though it crawled in the cities of Scutari, Elbasan and Janina.

The Albanians have always been and are passionate lovers of their soil and of their rocks, and the system of their life was built up on them. It was a rough system, but it suited the people ; every man was his own efficient policeman, and vengeance was their recognised code. What Europe would have labelled vengeance, they called justice. From the point of view of civilised countries, Albania was a lawless land, but the meaner crimes that smirch the chronicles of the police-courts of Western Europe were rare.

There was much to be said for the Albanian code.

If there were no railways, the chivalry of the Middle Ages continued to exist ; if men died a violent death by the wayside, there was no petty larceny. Truth, courage and fidelity were the qualities that this people cultivated and esteemed, and this fact was recognised all over the Near East. The guardians of the banks from Cairo to Greece, and from Constantinople to Jerusalem, were often Albanians. A breach of trust or a theft of money by an Albanian in a responsible position was so rare as to be practically unknown.

The Albanians possess another and a more undefinable quality : for they have a charm that is their own, and their land has an almost magical attraction that leaves a permanent impression upon the majority of those who have been there. It is to be felt in the aromatic sun-scorched highlands of the Catholic north,

in the peaceful plains of the south and in the mountains beyond that sweep up to the towering crags of the Pindus and Acroceraunian ranges.

The Albanians may be roughly divided into three groups: the Southern Albanians, who are of the Orthodox Greek religion and largely bilingual, having some knowledge of Romaic, though Albanian is their language; the Tosks, the kilted dwellers of Central Albania, who are chiefly Moslems; and the Mohammedan Ghegs, supposed to derive their name from the Greek *gigas*, giant, of the North. Neighbouring the Ghegs are a number of Catholic clans, whose fierce devotion to their barren soil has, at the cost of constant sacrifice, held it against Turk and Slav.

In looks and physique the Northerners of Albania rival any race in Europe. On market day at Scutari, in times that are past, one saw the lithe mountaineer, his head half-shaved and his restless, acquisitive eyes divided between the interests of merchandise and a tense awareness of the possible proximity of an enemy. The women have a loveliness unshared by, and different to, any other race. They look like Madonnas who have come down from snow mountains, but the wit and mental dexterity of the men of the mountains enliven the austere beauty of their women.

The career of modern Albania as a *débutante* among the nations began in 1880, when Mr. Goschen and Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice drew up a memorandum on the formation of an autonomous Albania. The frontiers that they proposed differed widely from those of to-day, for they included the plain of Kossovo, the vilayet of Scutari, the city of Janina and part of the vilayet<sup>1</sup> of Monastir. They were impartial men and their proposals aimed at peace. These proposals did not materialise; Albania led a stormy life from 1880

<sup>1</sup> *Vilayet*, a district under the control of a *Vali* or Provincial Governor.

until the *débutante*, shorn of much of her dowry, was finally presented at Court in 1921. But during all these years the idea of political unity grew stronger, not only in the country itself, but outside it, amongst exiles in Roumania, Bulgaria, Italy, Switzerland and America.

During the centuries that Turkey had dominated the Balkans, the sense of Nationality had been wrapt in a sleep of inanition in the lands under her sway. The Bulgars had slept without dreams, and it was only in dreams that the Serb remembered the glories of the past; the aspirations of Greece were limited to a small circle of intelligentsia. In Albania there had been no doubts and no dreams, because the people had never lost for an instant the knowledge and the certainty of their own race. Their disputes were not more important than duels between quarrelling Frenchmen, which after all, until recent times, occurred on the eve of, and almost on the scene of, a battle against a foreign enemy.

The spirit of unity had long been moving upon the face of the water, but had not yet found its ark. Before the country could arrive at a united and articulate purpose, it had to pass through ordeal by fire. All through the winter of 1912 the Montenegrins had been engaged on propaganda work amongst the Malisors of the north. M. Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Belgrade, had been working on the same lines as M. Venizelos in Athens for a Balkan Alliance. The Serbo-Bulgarian Alliance was signed in 1912 and this was followed by a Serbo-Montenegrin Alliance. The Montenegrins and the Bulgars had had an understanding for some time, and upon May 10, 1912, the ancient enemies, Greece and Bulgaria, largely through the instrumentality of Mr. Bouchier, correspondent of *The Times*, became friends and signed a treaty. The Turks grew anxious. A commission under Hadji



Adil Bey, accompanied by Mr. Robert Graves, went through Albania with a view to abolishing the grievances that were causing a ferment there. At Scutari, Hadji Adil appointed Hussein Riza Bey as Vali and Military Commandant of the city, which he soon began to fortify. The mission was more than once under fire in the course of its journey, and it failed to achieve success. No sooner had it left than an Albanian revolt in the vilayet of Kossovo broke out, with Issa Boletin at its head. The Albanian arms triumphed everywhere. The Albanians took possession of Uskub and held most of the north, where it was my fortune to see the incidents which are described in another chapter. The Porte realised that it must come to terms. An autonomy was promised to the Albanians, which was to include the vilayets of Kossovo, Scutari, Janina and part of Monastir. This concession, after the habit of concessions, came too late. It gave an impetus to the aggression of the Balkan Allies, none of whom wished to see an independent Albania. Fighting broke out all along the Montenegrin frontier, at Tusi, at Kolashin and at Andrievitza, but the Turks would not declare war, although the Montenegrins had used artillery near Tusi. The Balkan Powers declared war early in October.

During the Macedonian rising in 1903 the Albanians had sided with the revolutionaries; in 1908 they were the motive-power behind the Young Turks in the destruction of the Old Régime. In 1912 they were ready to join the Balkan States, but Greece, Serbia and Montenegro were hungry for the division of Albanian territory and did not desire the co-operation of a people who were unequipped with artillery. If the Albanians had not been quick to perceive coming events, they would have perished many centuries ago, nor did this generation lack the shrewdness of

its ancestors. It did not need a prophet's eye to foresee the division of Albania as the result of a victory of the Balkan Allies. Ismail Kemal Bey reached Valona in August, before the declaration of war by the Balkan States, at the beginning of which he returned to Constantinople. He came back again to Valona and proclaimed the independence of Albania, hoisting the National Flag on November 28, 1912. He notified the Powers, who paid no attention. The Greeks, however, alive to the emergence of a new State, took matters into their own hands, and blockaded Valona, the seat of the Provisional Government, of which Dom Nikola Kaccierri, Mufid Bey Libohova and Midhat Bey Fracheri were members.

In 1913 the Albanian Delegation, led by Ismail Kemal Bey, and including Mehmed Bey Konitza from the Moslem south, the Catholic Philippe Nogga, Monsignor Fan Noli, an Orthodox of Ibriktepé, and Faik Bey Konitza, representing the Albanian emigrants of America enrolled in the Federation of the Vatra (Hearth), came to London, to lay their case before the Conference of Ambassadors.

On March 6, 1913, King George of Greece was murdered at Salonika and King Constantine came to the throne. Meanwhile, the war had been going badly for the Turks: Salonika had been taken almost without a blow struck; Adrianople put up a heroic fight; Monastir was still besieged. In Scutari, Hussein Riza Pasha had been murdered as he left the house of Essad Pasha after dining there. In the Balkans it was customary for a host to send one or two armed men with lanterns to conduct a guest home after dinner. Hussein Riza Bey left the house of Essad Pasha alone. He was carried in again within three minutes, dying. *Bounou kim yapdı*—"who did this?" asked Essad Pasha. *Sen bendenü bilirsin*—"thou knowest better than I," said Hussein Riza, and died.

Essad Pasha, who then took command, came to terms with the Serbs. His critics said that finance played an important part in the conditions that were granted to him, and that he had been promised the principality of Central Albania. He marched out of Scutari, with the honours of war, on April 23. The Powers refused to recognise the Montenegrin occupation of Scutari, and Admiral Sir Cecil Burney went into the town at the head of international forces on May 13, as the Montenegrins evacuated it.

At the beginning of July the second Balkan war broke out. In London, the Conference of Ambassadors declared the Independence of Albania, and undertook to appoint a European Prince, and an International Commission to control finance. At the same time, August 12, they also appointed two International Commissions to delimit the northern and the southern frontiers of Albania. Lieut.-Colonel Granet was the English representative for the north, and Major Doughty Wylie for the south; on the Finance Commission the British representative was Mr. Lamb.

When peace was signed on August 10, 1913, at the Treaty of Bukharest, the Serbs, the Greeks and the Montenegrins entered on a campaign of "propaganda" in the annexed Albanian districts, burning villages and expelling the inhabitants. Prince William of Wied became Prince of Albania on December 13. On December 19 the Frontier Commission of the south assigned Koritza and Argyrocastro to the Albanians, and the Greeks were ordered to evacuate those areas. In 1914 Prince William of Wied was established in Durazzo. From the beginning to the end, in August of that year, of his short reign, he was completely the victim of circumstances. He was an honourable man, who attempted to do his duty, but he was a David without even a pebble and a sling fighting

Goliath. It was not to Italy's interest for Albania to pass under German influence ; Russia was guardian and author of Serb and Montenegrin aggression ; King Constantine desired the frontiers of Hellas to expand, and Essad was always at hand to work willingly for any rich enemy of his country.

Thus it happened that Albania, having been the first to fight for freedom, opened the way for the expansion of the other Balkan States at her own expense. The Balkan Allies went into Albania as friends and as liberators ; they remained as possessors and as heirs, who took the surest way of securing their inheritance. Albania had been like Samson in the Temple at Gaza ; she had pulled down the Ottoman Empire in ruins upon her own head. During the Great War armies of occupation, Austrian, French and Italian, marched and counter-marched across her country. During the Armistice her land was offered as a bribe to assuage the passion of her neighbours, but her unity was not affected, and in the welter of ambition, greed and vengeance that will make 1919 a by-word in history, her moral claim was such that it could not be ignored. In 1921 Albania was welcomed into the world-community of the League of Nations.

## A RIDE FROM MONTENEGRO TO USKUB

I HAVE attempted in the above section to summarise the events of recent years in Albania ; in the following chapters politics and history have the same relation to my journeys as the saddle has to the horse. If they are not comfortable they are inevitable. Politics and prestige make a journey easy or difficult, and when politics are reduced to their raw material—war—sometimes impossible.

Fate and inclination sent me continually to Albania from 1907 until 1918, when the War Office stationed me for a considerable time at Valona. During these years I had the opportunity of watching how inextricably the fortunes of this small country were woven into the history of Europe.

About the time of my first visit to Albania the endemic restlessness there had been increasing and was premonitory, not of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, but of the anxiety of units in that Empire about their future fate. The Albanians had intuitions of what might happen. In the summer of 1902 Russia had forced her Consul, M. Stcherbina, into Mitrovitza, where he only survived a few months before he was killed in a local rising which rumour said was provoked by himself. Next year the Russo-Japanese War occurred, the first chapter in a new struggle between East and West, where all the signs pointed to the fact that the East was discarding its old acquiescence in European domination in proportion as it was assimilating the clothes and the machine-guns of the West.

In Albania this had had the effect of producing two cross-currents of opinion. The Albanians were Europeans, but Europeans whose fiery blood had for centuries been poured out in repelling Slavonic invasion. Albania was nominally part of Turkey. She was like a headstrong boy who resented any mastership, but the drowsy Ottoman suzerainty did not interfere with national life, while it constituted some protection against the Slav and the Greek. During these years Albania relied uncertainly upon her decrepit but rich uncle, Turkey, and upon her more up-to-date patron, Austria.

In recent years, Albania, owing to its key position, has had an influence entirely disproportionate to its size. It has been the outlet and the fortress for which

the Jugo-Slavs, under the patronage of Russia, struggled ; the land whose position would have given Italy security and a land-locked sea, and the territory that obsessed the thoughts of Greek statesmen.

It was in 1907, I think, that I made my first journey to Albania. I had been staying in Italy, and left for Montenegro in the summer, taking with me the son of an Italian tenant of mine as my servant. We proceeded without adventure to the Bocche di Cattaro, where we went through the long mazes of water into the primitive Austrian port. There I first saw the instinctive dislike of the Italian for the Jugo-Slav. My servant, Marcantonio, after a few minutes on the pier, came to me indignantly : " I would rather be dead in the village at home," said he, " than alive in this country. To think that our King came here to marry ! The people smell."

We found that a hundred and six Cook's tourists had preceded us, urged, I suppose, by the same desire as myself to see the Prince of Montenegro distributing even-handed justice under an oak tree. It is perhaps worth while saying that even-handed justice and oak trees are equally scarce in Montenegro.

We took the last remaining barouche at Cattaro at a profiteer's price, and climbed the great mountain up the finely engineered zigzags. As the road grew higher and higher and the sun set upon the Adriatic, the filigree of the twisting river of the Bocche di Cattaro glowed crimson between purple shadows, while the great heights of Lovchen frowned above the brilliant tracery of light.

It was hot summer, but there were still patches of snow in which Cook's tourists had written their names. We had a frugal supper of ham at an inn before arriving

at Cetinje. At the capital we found that the hundred and six Cook's tourists had occupied all available space. At last we discovered one room for my Italian servant and myself.

The following morning I found a letter from Charles des Graz, our Minister in Montenegro, then on leave, and an old friend, saying that he could not consent to my crossing the frontier into Albania. I went to the Bank of Montenegro with my Italian and tried to change a cheque for ten pounds. This overstrained the credit of the Bank of Montenegro, but a registered letter of Miss Durham's was offered me instead. I left saying that I would return the following day, and, on the departure of Cook's tourists, obtained a room in the hotel of Montenegro. The town itself was so inconsiderable that its one distinction lay in the fact that it was the capital of a State; but the people were tall and martial and had the carriage of mountaineers. They were like arrogant younger sons, filled with pride in their achievements, but paupers in their pockets. At Cattaro there had been a dispute between an Austrian boatman and a Montenegrin.

"Behold in us," said the Montenegrin (this was interpreted to me), "the mirror of Slavism."

"And a very dirty-looking glass it is!" retorted the Austrian.

Turkey had in times past beaten and dominated Bosnia, Herzegovina and Serbia. The great lords in those provinces had adopted Islam; the poor peasantry had hibernated, keeping only the superstitious dregs of Christianity. The Montenegrins did indeed seem the chivalry of the Slavdom of Western Europe; the heart of that small country, composed of unvanquished immigrants and undefeated exiles, had never surrendered.

I passed a couple of days before returning to the bank. The rumour of my desire for ten pounds had

spread through Cetinje, and a part of the population armed with revolvers and knives watched with intelligent interest the changing of so large a cheque. My servant had been mourning for his native land like a cushat dove and returned the same day, while I hired a mule for my typewriter and two women guides to travel to Rjeka. The tall landlord of the inn at Cetinje, proud of his monopoly, offered little help. He said the English were a strong race: Rjeka was eight or nine miles and, if I chose, I was well able to carry my own luggage. The mule, the ladies and I left together. They were all unapproachable and "telegraph" was the only word of Montenegrin that I knew.

Occasionally I passed Montenegrins on the way who talked Italian, and some who had been in the United States had learned a broken English. They sat and smoked cigarettes. It was curious to hear their bloodstained stories of frontier warfare translated into childish language. The Turk was their enemy, then the Albanian. They were just beginning to emerge from the state of superb tribes whose glory had been their fortitude in the face of overwhelming odds, and whose romance centred round the rocks of their black mountain. Real politics were for the first time encroaching upon that savage stronghold. Montenegro, the younger son and the pioneer of Russia, until that day unsophisticated, had married a princess to Italy and a princess to Serbia. Her children were being wooed by Austria and her neighbours, and her returned emigrants could talk of the civilisation of New York and the comparative riches of Belgrade.

That night I offered refreshments to the clients of the inn at Rjeka while they talked politics. It was evident that they believed that, as the most ancient standard-bearers of Slavism, theirs was to be the



hegemony of the Balkans; they were jealous of Serbia, but their hatred was generally directed against Italy.

The next day I took the ferry-boat to Scutari, where I proposed to wait for the coming of my Albanian servant, Riza. It was an interesting and a stormy journey, with sudden winds and flights of spray. The great forest of slender tree-stems, tall reeds and bull-rushes bowed before the gusts. There was trouble amongst the passengers, who were of all kinds, and amongst the crew. A boy wounded an older man, who gave him good advice, with a knife, but not seriously. We had lunch at the island of Vir Pazaar, on excellent roasted eels. The inn was a poor place, propped above the water, and I should have been sorry to live there permanently. Everyone was very friendly.

The landing-stage at Scutari is of the usual unostentatious Turkish kind, and the streets beyond it often almost impassable from water. Driving in a great hurry, a few days later, to the Customs House, my carriage had been suddenly brought to a standstill; blocking the road lay a skinned carcass of a horse. The owner had considered that it was worth the flaying, and beyond quietly contemplating the remains, the inhabitants and passers-by did not think that they were called upon for active measures.

Scutari is of the East, but different from other towns in the East. Its spirit—for every Oriental town has a spirit—is rather reckless than fatalist. The Turks are in the habit of defending the honour of the women by high walls, but the height and strength of the walls of Scutari are no reflection upon the morality of its women. Men fortify their houses purely for their own defence. The vendetta still lived in Scutari and its influence was visible in the architecture of the houses. The alleys are not cramped and stifling

as in Constantinople or Salonika, and every way seems to end in the sky. The high-walled streets are relieved by magnificent archways, whose carving is delicate but never ornate. The doors have a look of antiquity, without that appearance of decrepitude, which is often as characteristic of Turkish buildings as the tiles upon the roof. But courtyards, or spacious gardens, are the usual entrance to the broad stairs that lead up to the balconies of the houses. The air of reserve about the town is natural when one remembers the frequency of vendettas.

Round the city are quiet cemeteries with nothing but quivering aisles of cypresses, "the constant mourners of the dead," to disturb the stillness, and the peace of those who sleep. These places are especially beautiful in the evening, when the slender columns of the minarets seem to support the tent of night which descends like an answer to the long cries of the muezzins. Here the end of the day was very pleasant, when the town laid aside its business and its past glories and lay contented in the sunset. The sky was pale honey and amber above mountains which seemed to dream they were dressed in snow, while the lake gave back every light in its proper value and, like a perfect mirror, revealed the world round it.

The small-talk of Europe is of love, the gossip of the Balkans was of hate. In London it would not be considered etiquette immediately after an introduction to inquire, "With whom are you in love?" And in Scutari, in those days, it would have been as rude to ask, "With whom are you in hate?" But the information came even sooner. Hate and fear are less easily hidden than love. One was quickly posted in the affairs of one's friends or acquaintances.

A few days after my arrival the bazaar at Scutari was filled with a report of a revolution in Montenegro; it was early in the morning when the news reached

me. I seized my hat, my razor and my revolver, and was just in time to catch the boat for the Black Mountain.

I made friends with an Albanian on the boat, and he and two countrymen of his (also merchants) and I took a carriage from Rjeka to Podgoritzza, which was said to be the storm-centre. The night was black; rain fell in sheets; we were cold and hungry, for there had been no food on board and I had missed my breakfast. At an inn on the road some ham was produced, which I looked upon with disfavour. My three companions, however, after squeezing it with their fingers, pronounced it excellent, and gave it to me to eat. We climbed on and up through the night. Every now and then a flash of lightning showed a wilderness of black rocks and ravines. It looked as if all the stones of the world had been collected in one revolting heap. My companions were nervous and anxious. We began to descend, and ahead of us the lights of Podgoritzza twinkled through the rain. Suddenly, the carriage was surrounded by men with lanterns, carrying rifles. I thought they were brigands, and as we were all armed I suggested to the Albanians that we should put up a fight. They implored me, for the love of God, to do nothing. In a moment two or three rifle-barrels were shoved into the carriage and pointed at us, and an explanation was demanded of us. The Albanian merchant was known to the captain of the patrol, and we were allowed to go into the town. There I dropped the Albanians and drove to the inn, which was locked. I banged at the door. A patrol came up and spoke to me in Montenegrin, in which language I could not reply. The door was opened; I was let in, and asked for food in Italian. Lanterns were held to my face, while loud and angry conversation went on round me. My temper rose, and I spoke with some acerbity upon the manners of Montenegro.

A tall Montenegrin, who had some authority, came forward and said he did not believe a word of my story: I was an Italian bent on mischief, or why had I come to Podgoritzza that night? To this the only reply that I could find was that I was an Englishman, and why, if I was ever going to come to Podgoritzza, should I not come that night? At last a plate of goat's cheese was put before me and something to drink. I was then taken up to a room, three or four armed men tramping behind me, and my door was locked. Next morning I stamped and shouted and banged upon the door, and was finally released by a surly Montenegrin. I went downstairs, where I found myself alone with the host, who seemed a very decent man and talked some Italian and Turkish. He told me that two days before, the Italian Tobacco Monopoly at Antivari had been blown sky-high by Montenegrin patriots. The land was in a turmoil; reprisals from Italian agents were suspected everywhere. Last night, a few hours before my coming, a prominent citizen, a *bairakdar* (standard-bearer),<sup>1</sup> had been summoned to the presence of the Governor. The *bairakdar*, a man of immense height and great spirit, had drawn his revolver and killed the chief of police, wounding the Governor terribly, and shooting another man dead. He himself had been instantly killed. He was said to be an Italian sympathiser, and the fact that I had arrived immediately after the murder, talking better Italian than the ordinary Montenegrin, had put me under suspicion. The sooner I left the better. I went outside the inn and saw the body of the *bairakdar*, with a few armed men behind it, going upon its dismal road to burial. He must have been about six foot four. That morning I wandered round Podgoritzza, and all those who had no more

<sup>1</sup> *Bairakdar*, literally translated, means "standard-bearer," but small local chieftains were often given it as an honorific.

important duty gave up their time to arresting me and taking me to the authorities. After a time I wearied of this routine and spent the day at the inn until the diligence left. When we had left Podgoritza, only politics were discussed. We wound up and down those precipitous roads, where each height gave a view of the monstrous bleakness of the Black Mountain, while the diligence stopped automatically at every inn for *raki*. The dead *bairakdar* had his adherents, as had the murdered Governor, and the talk grew more fiery and the direction of the horses more uncontrolled after each halt for refreshment. We reached Rjeka in the evening, and the following day I returned to Scutari. Riza had arrived, and I was burning with impatience to cross Albania to meet my brother at Uskub.

In those days travelling in Albania was difficult. The ordinary method was to obtain the *bessa*—that is to say, the word of honour or the protection of an Albanian chieftain, who made himself responsible for the safety of the traveller through his own district, where the Turkish troops were unable to penetrate. If misfortune befell the traveller, the chief was in honour bound to exact the adequate penalty from those who had injured the foreigner. This code of honour was very strict. There was constantly a state of *djak*, blood-feud, which meant occasional ambushes and often a desultory evening's warfare, when the day's work was over, between two villages. But even when hostilities were acute, the women were allowed to pass without molestation.

Unfortunately for me, there had recently been serious local trouble. The Turkish Government, it was alleged, had robbed a tribe (Ljuma, I think), and this tribe had retaliated, four days before my departure, by sending down six hundred men to hold the passes. These casual warriors had occupied the Turkish post,

and consumed a quantity of provisions, coolly informing the authorities that they might deduct the amount from the bill they owed the Albanians. These people would probably treat a foreigner well, but in their hands he would be half guest, half asset, stuffed with hospitality but held as a hostage against the Ottoman Government. In such circumstances, it was obviously no use asking the Turks for their help, nor had I time to procure the *bessa* of the chieftains on the way. On that particular road, however, this was not a pure disadvantage, for men have enemies as well as friends, and there was one clan who was said to take a childish delight in killing the guest of their enemy rather than their enemy himself, thus inflicting an indelible stain on his honour. After drinking a final coffee in the garden outside my hotel, with my friends—a Turk, an Egyptian, two Greeks and an Albanian—I started next morning an hour after dawn.

It was an intoxicating day between spring and summer, and the freshness of the dawn was so delicious that one felt unreasonably it must survive the heat of noon. I arrived at the bridge with my four horses, one for myself, one for the luggage, the third for my *kiraji* or hired man, and the last for my Albanian servant. Here the first difficulty presented itself. Luckily there was only one man at that early hour in charge of the bridge, and he was a recruit. He demanded my *yol teskere* (road-permit) in very broken Turkish; I equivocated. My passport, I said, was in my bag upon my horse; I would not open it and I was in haste. At this point a Greek came up and very suitably played chorus.

SOLDIER: "O Effendi, O my two eyes, give up thy *teskere*. The merciful Government requires this. Praise be to God!"

THE GREEK: "The merciful Government requires

this. Give up thy *teskere*, O Effendi. Praise be to God ! ”

MYSELF : “ God prosper the merciful Government ! This law was not for me, nor will I unpack my luggage.”

GREEK : “ This law was not for thee. Pass, O generous Lord.”

SOLDIER : “ O educated sir, O corner of my liver, stay. Thou shalt not pass. The merciful Government . . . ”

MYSELF : “ O dog, eat dirt, but behold that we part in friendship. This shall be a remembrance of me. Drink thy coffee alone that we would have drunk together.”

GREEK AND SOLDIER TOGETHER : “ We are grateful to thee, O Bey. Depart in peace. Smiling may you go, and smiling come again ! ”

So, in those days, were the obstacles of travel surmounted in Turkey.

We crossed the Drin in a curious contrivance. Two long and extremely narrow dug-out boats were lashed together, and, carrying my party with its horses and a *yolji* (wayfarer) who had joined us for protection, were all punted across. Then we rode swiftly into the mountains. It was my first sight of that country, beautiful as a dream, that has in it the hint of a dragon. By noon the heat was intense. In the urgency of leaving, and in doubt whether we should get through, we had brought no provisions except some bread. Riza and I were very old friends, but that day he did not respond to my cheerfulness, nor delight me with inconsequence, as once, on a thirsty march in the desert, he had done by ejaculating continually : “ The world is like a melon, but oh ! the stairway of fate. God send you prosperity ! ” He rebuked me for giving cigarettes to the *yolji* : “ This man is not of that kind,” he said. “ Be polite, but give him no cigarettes.” I walked most of the way, a habit of

mine which he hated and to which he had never become accustomed in spite of our three weeks' march to Damascus. As the road went up the hills, the heat grew in intensity in spite of the trees. We climbed a steep path, through luminous oak forests, which tantalised with their suggestion of coolness, and whose under-light is so like the impression one gets at the turn of a dive of sunlight seen through the green Mediterranean. At a place where the mountain to the south became almost a precipice in its steepness, and we could see across the tops of the trees, we found a forest fire. The opposite cliff came and went through and beyond rising smoke like a mirage. There was no sign of life except the sound of cuckoos calling with their May note. At the end of the descent the land seemed determined to be bare. The woods ended abruptly. In these uncovered places the stone heaps that mark the site of a man's grave are, curiously enough, more numerous. The reason may be that the man who wishes to kill another does not care to run the risk of being stalked himself. Occasionally the barrenness of the land was relieved by an uninviting scrub of dwarf fir trees and juniper. Vivid white rocks were visible on the mountains facing us, and in the distance looked like cities. Riza was reserved, and referred every question I asked him to Fate, an unsatisfactory habit in a courier. Every now and then there was a clearing in the woods, surrounding the fortified home of a mountaineer.

Finally, we arrived, as the sun set, at a hamlet, the second in our day's journey, called Chereti. Progress became very slow. Men with rifles met us and paused and halloed to other men with rifles, none of whom spoke Turkish. We were escorted through meadows of rich grass, well irrigated with small dykes, to a one-storied house, where the patriarch of a huge family offered us hospitality. Riza entered upon a



voluble conversation with our host, who gave us the lugubrious news that there were still some hundreds of tribesmen holding the pass ahead of us. I asked for water. In the excitement of talking, Bairam, our host, had deposited his rifle at the door, and thoughtlessly walked some yards from it. He took it up again instantly and went to draw water from a well fifty yards away. A bed that was almost a fetish in the house was given me in a tiny room partly open to the air and some fowls on one side, but from which there was no egress, as the women of the family were in the hall that cut me off from the outer door.

The next morning, after many hand-kissings, invitations to return and blessings, I left.

As in Arabia, so in Albania, one feels a certain reluctance to say good-bye to fertility, because fertility is almost equivalent to a guarantee of security. Where land is cultivated the people have a stake and feel responsible for their actions; cultivated land is a hostage for good behaviour.

At dawn we had a cup of Turkish coffee. Our Christian muleteer, a Malisor, was in the highest spirits and sang in the woodland way, arousing the resentment of Riza. When I asked him why he, too, could not be cheerful, he answered angrily, "He is responsible for four horses; I am responsible for you."

"Anyhow we have the *bessa* of the Lord of the horses," said I.

"His *bessa*," said Riza, with a wealth of abuse, "is not worth a farthing. Son of a dog, may he eat dirt!" After this amiable expression taciturnity covered him like a cloak.

The morning of the day before, we had ridden through green meadows where the hedges may have been accidental, but the lie of the land was like Devonshire, until a window in the hedge showed those white mountains which give the country its name. Albania

has a great advantage over other countries ; there is water everywhere. We gave ourselves up to the greediness of drinking ice-cold water. I remember one waterfall set in rosemary, and the water was sometimes so clear that its mother, it seemed, must have been crystal, not rock. Riza, with much reverence, produced a holy bottle which he had bought at Kerbela. The memory of his language at that sacred place was like a screen between our time there and the blessings he now poured upon it.

I left my little pony free and walked behind it, watching its four clever, solidly placed heels tinkling up and down the rocks of the steep path ; but when I wanted to ride, and went forward to catch my animal, he kicked me, with accuracy and amazing vigour, between the knee and the thigh. It may have been because we had had little food, or because of the pain, but this kick made me faint. Riza said, "Where did this beast, God give it trouble, strike you ?" and instantly massaged my leg with fury. "Arise," he said, "walk ; if the leg is not broken, all will be well." And so it was. I suggest instant exercise as a sure remedy to all who suffer the same misfortune.

As we marched, I looked at a view that was grand—stripped of forest and where the mountains were rugged and naked. I said to Riza : "Here at any rate you need feel no responsibility for me. We can see for miles. Talk more cheerfully. Make the way pleasant with conversation. If there were bad men, could we not see them ?"

"How can we see ?" he answered. "Have we telescopes, as they have ?"

They have begun to be up-to-date in the Balkans. A foreigner on a holiday in these countries does not do justice to the people : in those days they hunted or were hunted and their lives were generally in

immediate peril. The traveller forgets that though occasional danger is exhilarating, its constant presence is wearing.

We crawled on tired horses into a new scenery which I thought as magnificent as any I had ever seen in Europe.

The country in itself was a high adventure. Everywhere gorges flung water headlong into the valleys, and so clear was the air that the farthest boundaries were as clean-cut as the impression on a coin. Though we were not riding on dizzy heights the path was dangerous; often for fifty yards at a time it was only a foot or eighteen inches broad, and sometimes frayed on the turn of a corner for a few inches into invisibility.

It was impossible to dismount, and one could only watch the stones falling from the path down to where one's shadow lay sixty or a hundred feet below. I left the entire responsibility to my horse. Once it was stung by a fly, and it pranced in a way that made me tremble, but I did not touch the reins. It was a fearful joy to look ahead and mark the cliff we were to climb, where the track seemed to have had as much purchase on the face of the mountain as the shadow of a rope. It appeared impossible for horses to keep their footing upon what was only a scratch upon precipices, but they did so. We passed few men. Riza could not bear my being even a small distance ahead. Once, passing from a cavern in the mountain to a valley filled with the sound of rivers, the muleteer and I were attacked by an enormous sheep-dog, and defended ourselves with difficulty. Some half-dozen wild Albanians, his masters, sat a few yards off with rifles on their knees, watching with unconcern. Once, riding round a corner, I came suddenly upon an Albanian, who unslung his rifle as I drew my revolver. He cried, *Tunghiat jeta!*

("Long life to thee"), and I said "Salaam," and we passed each other with salutes.

Constantly we forded clear streams with stones like garnets in them. That night we came to a place appropriate to my condition—Sakati, which means "lame." At Sakati there was a squalid khan, where men and horses slept or watched together. A room was given to me, with a slimy floor of mud and a greasy trestle-board on which to sleep; it had one other article of furniture, an umbrella-rack. I had a volume of *Adam Bede*, which made a pillow. While we waited for our only food that day, I sat in a beautiful cemetery, broken and decayed. The sunset was wonderful; great beams of light came and went from one towering range to another. The wind whispered in the almond trees, and from the dusky green oakwood came the recurrent tinkle of the brook. That night in my hut was intolerable. A man tried to break in and mice never ceased from revelling. At dawn we started off at a great pace. My attendants were most nervous at that early hour, fearing that our arrival overnight had been observed.

We left behind the chestnuts, hazel, sycamore and the almonds in bloom that had marked the way the day before, and travelled now through planes and oaks. At six (Turkish time), that is noon, we struck the Drin again; it was in a turbulent mood. The path was so fragile that it looked as if the wind might blow it away. - I was riding in front of our little caravan when the path descended to the river. I went along it like Agag, knowing that at any moment my horse and I might sound the depths of that fierce, muddy river. Finally we had to turn and retrace our steps, and I added this precept to travellers' wisdom: "If there are two tracks, always take the higher." No one, unless he is obliged to do so, will choose the harder way, which probably only exists because the lower

one has been destroyed. It was with the utmost difficulty that we returned. We rode on through a dark forest until we came out into the sunlight, to the first of three fine bridges—fine, that is, for the country. They are, it is true, impassable as far as carriages are concerned, but as there are no roads on either side of them this does not very much matter. The first, I was told, was built a hundred years ago, by Shkodra Vizier. They had each a couple of arches, with holes like Gothic windows to relieve the weight of the waters. At the first bridge, we met two cavalymen and eight infantry, the only sign of Turkish occupation in all our march.

The Turks followed their usual custom; their salutations were very friendly. But I was not sure if they were there to meet a guest or a prisoner: I called a halt. We sat, smoked and drank water together, and I learned what had happened. A telegram had been sent from Scutari, said the Turks, about an Englishman for whom their benevolent Government cared greatly. He must therefore be met at the first possible point and cherished by the *asker* (soldiers). We lay under a great box-hedge, which gave us shade while we talked. The sergeant of the *suwari* (cavalry) overwhelmed me with congratulations.

HE: "God has wished this [my safe arrival]. How beautiful! God is great!"

I: "God is generous. God has wished this. Thanks to God!"

HE: "The last who came through was not as Your Excellency. He came in the time of peace and not through troubles, with a great escort for protection, and myself, but—oh! woe, God give them trouble—ragged men shot at him, not for iniquity but for diversion, from the mountain, and his hat was pierced by a bullet. He was a Lord of Magarystan (Hungary)."

I: "Alas for the Lord of Magarystan!"

The sun was very hot upon the mountain, and grey and green lizards scudded through the dust in front of the horses' hoofs to shelter under the thyme. After a climb we arrived at the third and last bridge, below Mount Lumi, whose appearance is as menacing as its reputation is grim. On it the snow had turned to icicles and these were still riveted to its sides.

(I heard afterwards that within an hour and a half of our departure the bridge was in the hands of the Albanians.)

I was impressed by two features of animal life: the tortoises which we continually met and I carried from the path into the woods; and one Albanian puppy at the bridge. Its master told me that it was four months old, but it allowed no one to touch his property.

The road through the forest was what the Turks call *chossee* (*chaussée*), which sometimes means a way upon which it is not possible to travel; but they speak of it in hushed, respectful voices. We travelled quickly along, through the twilight of the trees that opened out in glade after glade, while the river sang and flashed through the shadows of the forest. Finally we came out on to an open hill-side covered with heather, and found one shepherd asleep amongst wild hyacinth, in the shadow of an ilex with his gun for a pillow, while his companion played upon the flute of Pan. In the distance, perhaps half an hour away, we could see the White Drin, just before its junction with the Black Drin. I said good-bye with reluctance to the avenues of the forest, as we emerged on to the plain of Prisrend. Our *suwaris* were good fellows and we rode at ease ahead of the baggage animals. The peasants whom we met were mostly Christians and, as far as we could tell, unarmed, though the *suwaris* said they carried weapons secretly. The *suwaris*

asked me for my photograph, and spoke in high praise of His Imperial Majesty, the Sultan, the shadow of God upon earth, who had caused their salaries to be paid. We trotted over a comfortable land of red, fertile soil, till the town came in sight, as white with its mosques and minarets as the snow that covered the crest of the mountain behind it. The bridge that crosses the Drin is firm, and the wooden flooring, in spite of holes, which time has worn, kept in fair repair, while the whole of its length is roofed. The rush of water makes a delightful accompaniment to the cooing of doves. The cemeteries outside and in the town are shadowy with tall groups of poplars. I had often heard the Albanian soldiers praising Prisrend, yearning through the heat of desert nights for its coolness. When I saw the place I understood their affection. Like all highlanders; they long for their mountains, and much of the trouble which they used to give the authorities was the result of this homesickness. Turks are always pleased to meet one who has visited their home in distant Anatolia, but their love for home is the almost casual feeling of a wandering race, not the passionate and poetic longing characteristic of the Albanians. In the desert the Albanian hears the sound of pigeons' flight and the murmur of streams; he sees the shimmer of mosques before dusk and he feels the cool air of Prisrend or Kalkandilen in the evening.

At Prisrend I received a polite message from the *Kaimakam* (Governor) and found an excellent inn with a Serbian *hanji* (innkeeper), whom I recommend to all travellers. Here, after some hours, I procured a meal of rice and soup.

During the last three days we had only had one meal a day, and that of rice, and the bread which we had taken with us had become so hardened by the heat that unless we dipped it in water it was not

possible to eat it ; yet on our arrival neither Riza nor I could eat for weariness. When we had finished trying to eat, the Italian consul, with the hospitality of his race, invited me to stay with him. I begged to be excused, but went for a second dinner to his house, where I nearly fell asleep in the soup. The consul had entertained the unfortunate "Lord of Magarystan." This traveller had come by easy stages and with a large escort from Scutari, but "he also was sleepwalking," said the Italian. He sent the guard back with me to my inn. As I went to bed, the sound of firing broke out in the street, but weariness had conquered curiosity, and my bed, in which I noticed with passing regret that one other—perhaps many—had recently slept, called to me irresistibly.

The final stage of our journey was luxurious. Riza had contrived to obtain a carriage.

"Sit beside me," I said, "and we will discourse."

"Not so, my soul. Is it through me that dishonour shall come to you ?" he answered, and took his place upon the narrow seat opposite, a very handsome ruffian from the waist upwards, but lacking the slow dignity that Turkish trousers confer, since a present of mine, stockings and knickerbockers, clothed him from the ankles to his sash.

The weather made it a pleasure to live, and our progress through the town was almost royal. In the market, where a trellis of vine gave some shade to the butchers' shops, most of the people stood up salaaming, while some enthusiasts called down blessings upon us. I did not understand their motives, but, encouraged by my *kavass*, I responded cordially. When we came to the outskirts, and the country lay before us in wave after wave of rolling ground, Riza consented to sit beside me, his good temper renewed.

"We have passed the mountains and the fastness,



where all men that saw you, Effendi, said, 'Allah, Allah. Here is rest, and freedom from care.' " He smoked cigarettes and sang.

## THE SANJAK OF NOVI BAZAR

*TUESDAY, August 20, 1912. Vienna.*—I went to the Embassy, where they were all kind, but had, apparently, no knowledge of what was happening, or likely to happen, in the Balkans. Austria, I gathered, was not likely to take the first step.

Jack (my servant) and I left Vienna at 3 p.m. It was very hot. I talked with an opulent Salonika Jew. He was very unhappy about the fate of his co-religionists, Talaat and Djavid. Their position is unfortunate. Pressed from the south by an ungrateful Government, attacked from the north by fifty thousand angry Albanians, it looks as if the men as well as the methods of the C.U.P.<sup>1</sup> will soon have to be tactfully hidden. He talked of the good old days of Abdul Hamid, when there was no trouble for such as him. "O mihi præteritos referrat si Jupiter annos." Then a man from Krivolak got in, with his mother. He was going south in a panic. The papers say that the Albanians are moving on Salonika, and that the Turks are retiring.

*Wednesday, August 21, 1912. Sarajevo.*—We arrived at Sarajevo soon after 8 p.m. It was a hot and sleepless night. We stayed at the Hôtel Europe, run by Slavs. The clerk of the British Consul, who is away, came to see me.

*Thursday, August 22, 1912. Priboi.*—The clerk of the Consul and I went to the Club, to the bazaar, and to the French Vice-Consul . . . who was acting for us; then to the Turkish Consul-General, who was a

<sup>1</sup> Committee of Union and Progress.

good linguist, and talked Greek, Italian and French, and promised me all help—a very pleasant fellow. There are at present many rumours, but no news. There is no one to get it. The air brings it, and those who give it out are liars. It does, however, appear that the garrison of Sarajevo has been increased, though there are no visible signs of it. It is said that officers of the high command turn up in church, but their men are not here. Where are the men? Are the Austrians going to annex the Sanjak immediately? What is going to happen in Europe if they do? Also, what is going to happen to Jack and me? It is going to be an unpopular position to be a foreigner in the Sanjak with Turks and Albanians at this moment, if a *coup* comes off. I have seen no signs of mobilisation, except one train of soldiers travelling south, but many are reported to have come here in cattle-trucks, travelling by night. The hotel-keeper said that a very high Turkish officer had arrived without luggage, and that his men had mutinied. He also said that I had better stay here, in his hotel, for an indefinite time. The Turkish Consul-General said that he was going to Constantinople, for there everything was so quiet and restful. That, said he, was the one place for perfect peace. He discounted the Albanian disturbance, and told a long story of the Vali of Janina and how his enemies had hired ten men to shout against him. Some more took up the cry because they liked shouting, though they cared nothing about the Vali. This he gave as an interesting parallel to the present action of the Albanians. It was the unconsidered movement of the mob. But the unconsidered actions of mobs do make history, sometimes.

I met Freiherr von Pawel, who took me to the house of Baroness Pitner. Later, he and I and the clerk dined together and talked politics. Austria, he said, would do nothing unless another Power, Bulgaria, for

instance, moved. Austria's road to the sea was essential. There were two sets of opinion in the Slav world. There were the Trialists of Croatia, Bosnia and Dalmatia, who wanted to come in under the Monarchy, but not under Austria-Hungary, and there were those, mainly Serbs, who firmly intended to break off altogether.

Coming back to my hotel, I met the high Turkish officer, who gave a very natural account of his presence. He advised me to go by the Metalka road.

I left the Hôtel Europe after a row about my bill, and missed the first train at the station through the fault of an Austrian driver. The Austrians are most charming people, but I cannot conceive them ever catching a train unless they are run over by it. They ought to fight their duels to slow music, and the Empire, whose routine is *haute école*, is finished. I was glad to leave Sarajevo. In the town the West is conquering the East; the mean hotel crowds out the mosque; the ostentation of the synagogue is blatant. It is a blemished Western phoenix rising from the ashes of an Eastern city, or rather from its mist, for it rained all the time I was there.

Oh, East is East and West is West,  
And never the twain shall meet,  
Till the West is a pimpled, lamplit youth  
And the East is a flower at his feet.

The Austrians are kind, at all events to Englishmen, and if they are inefficient, they are better than the rabble that they rule. They look on the Sanjak as as much theirs as next year's harvest. We are justified in standing in their way, but not in resenting their natural and inevitable policy of *Drang nach Osten*. The Sanjak is to-day a no-man's-land, occupied by the Turks, held precariously by the Albanians, ruled by none. Austria looks on it as the key to her future, and

to her it is a key that a jackdaw may steal, for a jackdaw can steal the king's keys as well as those of common mortals. Serbia may hop in and close that narrow and constricted path to the Ægean. Once I wanted to see that happen, but am not so sure now. Montenegro, even with her pea-shooters, may become a dangerous enemy. Austria, after having, through natural-born foolishness, lost her provinces and missed her opportunities, must be in earnest, but I see no considerable quantity of troops anywhere. She may be so accustomed to being unprepared that she cannot get out of the habit.

The railway from Sarajevo is wonderful. It is like the railway at the White City, only far more sensational, except that there is less danger of losing your hats, because the carriages are not open. Jack loathes it. It runs along the lip of a precipice and shoots through tunnels. From darkness it twists into a blaze of light, over foaming cataracts; out of the womb of the cliff it shoots, like a bullet through corrugated iron. Above and below, the cliffs are sheer. On the flank, cañons widen into valleys, valleys are broken into gorges and beyond are tangles of ravines and woods and mountains, cut sometimes by clear streams and sometimes by brown and frantic torrents. Huge cliffs seem to move above, as the train is hurled from tunnel to tunnel, often tall and naked, with great daubs of scarlet earth, and again clothed in *macchia*.

Different counsels were given to me in Sarajevo. The first advice, Austrian, was, "Do not go to the Sanjak; it's a desperate place, since we have left it." The second, from the educated Moslems, "It's a perfect place, as delightful as any Bill of Lloyd George." Some of the Moslems said to me, "Do go there. It used to be very dangerous, because the politicians were brigands, but now the brigands have become politicians, and it is quite safe."

When I took my ticket, the Austrian at the guichet said to me, "*Seien Sie nur gewaffnet*"—you be well armed—"and," he added, "don't you talk Turkish, whatever happens." A man in the crowd, a Serbian, I suppose, hurried forward and said, "On your life, don't talk Italian; it is more unpopular than Turkish, and German is even worse." A poor Turk in the train said, "Above all things, don't go armed. Rely upon the merciful Government and hide your weapons."

The odd thing about Sarajevo is that I could get no information. In Greece, Montenegro or Serbia, you know more or less what is happening across the frontier. In Greece you are informed that "The Onion has cut off the ears of seven Jews"; but in Sarajevo, though people were ready to talk quite freely and believed that war was imminent, it was impossible to get news of what was going on in the Sanjak.

At Priboi a company of us sat down upon the balcony and talked very vivid politics, while the rain fell in cataracts, and the Greek boy, Ignatius, brought cognacs. The Mudir (Governor) consented to tell me the fourteen Albanian grievances, but fainted by the way after enumerating four of them. Then there was a heated discussion about the Russo-Japanese War. The Moslems wondered whether Turkey would follow in the footsteps of Japan, and if not, why not? Christians were there and had their say, too.

Then we dined, served by Ignatius the Greek, who could give no consequent account of how or why he had arrived in this desolate place. The deputy Kiazim told of the wicked electioneering lies of the Committee, and his audience called loudly upon the name of God. I talked to some Christians who said that the Turkish and Albanian trouble had not affected them, but they were very nervous of the future. The innkeeper complained that the exaggerated rumours of war prevented

people from coming, much as a Margate hotel-proprietor might protest against the exaggerated reports in the Press of the sanitation of his town.

I left the Turks and went up to a damp room, with the rain pouring off the roof.

*Friday, August 23, 1912. Priepolie.*—I got up this morning before seven, and we drove off into torrents of rain. The hooded roofs of our little carriages sang and shuddered under it. Last night, the talk was optimistic and of peace. This morning, when I woke, Kiazim Bey, the deputy, came into my room. He said that the news had come by telegram of severe fighting at Berana, that Djavid Pasha was on the march there from Mitrovitz, and that he intended to go there if I would go with him. I said I was quite willing to go if it did not take too long. We stopped on the road for refreshments, and my opinion as a European was asked by the Moslem company. I answered discreetly. "We have no other alternative but to fight," said Kiazim, "*hephsimiz uluruz*. We will all perish together." After talking about the friendship and the quarrels between the Albanians and the Turks, I said to him, "You fight and yet you are friends?" "Yes," he said, "the fact is that we have made a habit of both things." Austria, he said, was not hated by the Albanians of to-day. She did much good work and brought in money. He continued that all the Albanian deputies were not against the Committee of Union and Progress, and that he personally was strongly in favour of it, though he criticised it and its methods freely. The Committee had done very well at first, but had then gone too fast and did not understand the Albanian character. The Committee would surely come back or blood would flow. As far as he was concerned, his constituents would damn well do what he told them to. More cognacs.

We then started in a drizzle on the way, which, on

the whole, was monotonous. The mountains were on both our flanks. He and the soldiers talked a great deal about the Italian War. They were more interested in that, apparently, than in the immediate present. They agreed that it was very difficult to give up—very difficult, in fact, to do anything. They were suspicious of the Arabs, who, they believed, might make peace at any moment, which would put Turkey in an awkward position. Kiazim seemed to think a European Conference with renewed assurances of the integrity, etc., of the Ottoman Empire and the admission that the Sultan was the spiritual chief of Tripoli, might satisfy them; otherwise, again "*hephsimiz uluruz*. We shall all perish."

At 10.30 the weather became fine, and a jolly gendarme, Ramadan, rode with me. He sang, in a good voice, a conventional theme, not often turned into ballad—the complaint of a mother against her son for having married a girl who would not work. The mournful cadences of the river below and the rain on the trees made a good accompaniment. I asked his opinion of the Committee. He was a supporter. Before the Committee had come in this neighbourhood, they (the population) had robbed, they had beaten, they had killed; now that was finished. To-day they just took a few sheep or goats when the need occurred, and there were perhaps something like ten murderers only round Sienitza. Two dogs followed us, one called Paris, and were at once adopted by the Moslems. I did not ride much with Kiazim, who seemed to be increasingly nervous, and shy of me as a foreigner, but he came up at one moment and asked me to write down the names of the English Cabinet, its policy, the character of its members, and what they thought of the Turkish question. Later on Ramadan stayed at a village, and his place was taken by two other soldiers, who were strongly anti-Com-

mittee. "But though we break with the Committee of Union and Progress, we will never abandon unity. On that we depend. The Italians should be driven out of the world, infamous traitors." They said it was very hard to have three frontiers, Austria, Serbia and Montenegro, all so close to each other. We English had got the sea. Why should it be our monopoly; why should not the poor Moslems have it too? It added so infernally to the trouble of life to have so much land responsibility without the help of the sea. There is a good deal of truth in what they say. They are not between the hammer and the anvil, but between red-hot pincers that may close in on them at any moment.

Most of the houses we passed were those of *muhajjirs* (refugees) whom the Government had helped with grants of land. They were pleasant and hospitable people, and seemed to bear less ill-will than most dispossessed men, probably because they are nomads by disposition. We met Moslems and Christians walking hand-in-hand, and Serbian girls were singing in the hills, that were sunny between the showers.

It is quite apparent that the "beautiful brotherhood" of the C.U.P. has gone. If it is to the credit of the Committee that it created this brotherhood, it is the Committee that has broken it. And gone also are the near and the far hopes: the flowery revolution is ended—paradise on earth is played out. The rainbow has faded, and they are all quarrelling about the fairy gold at its end. Still, the comparatively good feeling of this place is probably due to the fact that there are only Slav Christians and Moslems here. It is not complicated, as it is in Macedonia. When a crime is committed here it is by one side or the other. In Macedonia it may be by a simple, one-idea'd criminal or one of half a dozen holy propagandists; and this creates a feeling of enduring sus-



picion and bitterness. And again, in spite of the terrors of these people, there is no chance of Serbia taking anything from Turkey to-day. If any Power is going to do it, it will be Austria, but one cannot help feeling very sorry for this Moslem population. They are all prophets of disaster, and it is difficult to conceive a more haunted position. They are living upon a spit of land like a serpent's tongue—a poisoned peninsula in which they are prisoners, with enemies to the north and worse enemies to the east and to the west.

The nature of the inhabitants, said the soldiers of the escort, was on the whole good. I asked them about Issa Boletin. They said that with his own rifle he had killed a hundred men and that he was a grand leader. Last time I came through, in the dead of winter, I crossed the tracks of Issa Boletin. Then he had only got a score to his credit, according to my gendarmes, but I was shown a hill that he had held in a snow-storm, attacked by an overwhelmingly greater force. Through the rifle-fire and the gale, the men attacking him heard him shouting orders to his followers to fire upon the Turkish soldiery and to spare the Albanian gendarmes. "Down, down with every foreigner, but let Albanians go." He is the Robin Hood of the Balkans. Riding along, I was also shown the white stones that marked the resting-place of some of his enemies.

The soldiers of the escort wanted to know how the Turkish Cabinet was composed. I told them how, to the best of my ability, and they applauded loudly, especially the name of Kiamil Pasha, because he was known to be a friend of England, and they still put their trust in England. Their perpetual appeals to us are poignant after the last five years. They were all in good spirits. The fasting of Ramadan, which they kept rigidly, did not affect their cheerfulness.

We came into Priepolie, and I got into conversation alone with the Serb *hanji*, an obliging man, who talked frankly. He said that trade was broken and oppression reigned in the Sanjak, though less here than elsewhere. He said that his life was a miserable lot. My escort left me alone, and I was able to wander about as I liked. Kiazim Bey, the deputy, had departed, silently and sullenly, taking a western road. After Priepolie, the scenery became beautiful, and reminded me of Southern Albania, where sweeping downs grow into high mountains. If this country is miserable, it is so in an unostentatious way, not like Macedonia, where terror and ruin meet you in the mountains and the plains. The Kaimakam of Priepolie is an unhappy man. I went to see him last night, sitting in the discomfort that only a Turk can endure and not remedy. He said that his health was broken with anxiety, that he never knew when the crisis was upon him, but he was sure that it was coming immediately. I went back to the khan, where he came to return my call and sat amongst the tooth-brushes, boots and vests that Jack had unpacked in my soiled room. He hated the responsibility of his post, which cannot be much, and knew his lack of resources.<sup>1</sup>

He would not talk of the Committee, which, I suppose, means that he supports it. I was awakened in the morning by the sound of some troops passing, not many. The two little dogs still follow us. We help them along. The one called Paris is a particular favourite of everyone.

*Saturday, August 24, 1912. Sienitza.*—This morning we went out with an unusually big escort, forty or fifty men, a charming Turkish officer in command. He gave me his horse to ride. I am not quite sure if this was an act of courtesy or if he was glad to have

<sup>1</sup> He was a better judge of his own circumstances than I was, as events were shortly to prove.

someone else on its back. The horse was a very hot bay. When he bucked rather too close to the edge of the precipice, the Turkish captain said genially, "He plays. He likes playing; it is his nature." He and the soldiers, to whom I talked, said that things were better after the revolution, and brigandage had ceased. They referred once more to the fact that seems to be a matter of local pride, that there were very few murderers round Sienitza. The Albanians took that town about a month ago. They released all the prisoners—about 400—and amongst these were a hundred murderers, according to some, rebels according to others, patriots in the minds of a third party. I thought it was very creditable that only ten assassins haunted the locality. The gendarmes were badly paid. We passed through a very changing country. After a time conversation stopped. We met some dishevelled soldiers on the road and they made a communication to the escort and the *yuz-bashi* (captain) which was not passed on to me. Anxiety and gloom fell upon our party, and we went on in silence. We were going down a road between two hills in the evening, as we came to Sienitza. Suddenly a crowd of bashi-bazouks came to meet us, and on the right flank there was a rush of, I suppose, a hundred or more armed men. I tried to gallop round to join my escort, but they seized the reins of my horse, making him rear, and told me to dismount. I got off and walked in the middle of the throng, in a savage rage. I then stopped and said I was accustomed to ride when I wanted to ride and to walk when I wanted to walk. They answered me, "If you wish to, ride." Then, as I was mounting, my saddle came round. It was a moment of affliction and humiliation, where in the West people would certainly have laughed. They offered no help and made no comment. Jack came up, and he and I

put the saddle straight and tightened the girth. I mounted and we went into the confused and angry town. The escort had disappeared. There was a lot of shooting going on. We were taken to the khan of the town. I was unceremoniously pushed upstairs and Jack was hustled and roughly handled. The crowd was kept back. We were taken into a fairly big room and about twenty-five armed men crowded in with us. I was anxious to keep control of the situation and, as their host, I invited the twenty-five to sit down upon a bed, and began talking about general things. Meanwhile, they had torn open my luggage. Jack had remained calm throughout. He now came up to me and said indignantly, "Do you see that man? He has taken your brushes and he is brushing his moustache with them." This giant had a moustache like a walrus. I spoke to him in a friendly way, and said, "You should not do that." He said, "Why not, pray?" I answered, "Well, if you came to my country, I should not break open your bag, nor use your brushes." "No," he said, "I suppose not. I have no bags like yours nor are my brushes made of ivory." Another man, of about six foot four, armed to the teeth, came up and spoke angrily to me, while the others listened. He said, "You are an Austrian, and you have come to take our land." I said, "I am not. I am an Englishman, a Dere-bey (landowner). I have too much land of my own, and don't want yours. It is a bad business being a landlord to-day. Land brings you in practically nothing."

All this time the shooting was going on outside. Another very tall man, called Ahmed, who became my friend, came up to me. He said, "Fear nothing, my lamb; these men lack civilisation, but I have been in prison at Smyrna for five years and in prison at Monastir for seven, and I know what civilisation is. These men

are wild." The conversation became general and rather more friendly. They told me that they had just taken the town and that the people had killed the Kaimakam of Berana, who was being buried at that moment. I gave them cigarettes and showed them my Mauser pistol, my patent razor and a big clasp-knife. I said to them, "What is all this shooting going on outside? Are they killing the Christians? I can't have that." They said, "No, it is only the boys, in their excitement, firing off their guns." I made a brief and, I hope, tactful harangue, saying that I did not know what their troubles were, but that England had always been a friend of the Moslems, and it was not fair to blame me for anything that had happened at Sienitza. With regard to the lamented Kaimakam of Berana, I said nothing at all. After this, they all trooped out and the *hanji* came up a very frightened man. He and another man, Sherif, told me that the Bosniaks and the Albanians wanted war with Austria and with Montenegro, that they had captured the town the day before, and had killed Ivan, the Kaimakam of Berana. They believed that he was carrying dispatches from Montenegro to Serbia, and the crowd had stabbed him to death in his carriage, as he was leaving the *konak*<sup>1</sup> of the Governor, who was now a prisoner. They had gone to telegraph to Issa Boletin at Mitrovitza, to ask what they were to do about me.

I then went out, leaving Jack with my things, to find the other little dog, not Paris, which I had lost coming into the town and to see what was happening. The town was still extremely excited, and as soon as I was in the market-place the same men rushed up to me and said that I must go back to the inn at once, as there was danger in the town. They brought me some mutton fat for dinner, and they came back with me. Then I got a connected account of what had

<sup>1</sup> Government Office.

happened. The feeling of the people had been much stirred by the Montenegrin fighting round Berana. The Kaimakam who had been killed was a man called Ivan or Ilia Popovitch, a Serb, and an official of the Young Turks. There was still a good deal of danger to the Christians in the town, but the Bosniaks and Albanians now listened quietly when I said that they would be disgraced if any harm was done to the Christian population. They agreed. One Bosniak ruffian told me he had saved a number from the crowd. Not one of them defended the murder of Ivan. One man said to me crisply that the man was dead and the matter was done with, but most saw farther than that. I am inclined to think that it was a good thing that we came into the town when we did. I was able to see two or three Christians, who were all armed. One man showed me a hidden revolver, and below it a cross. They said that terrible times were coming. I said after my speech that I proposed to go and pay my respects to the *mutesarriiff*. They did not much like this, but they acquiesced, and I sat down and showed the warriors how to work a typewriter. We went to the Governor at the *konak*. Night had fallen, and the room was dark. He and I talked in Turkish, without making any reference to the disorderly events that had occurred. The mountaineers stood round in grim silence, leaning on their rifles and hidden by shadows. After a few minutes' conversation, and after the usual compliments, I asked leave to return and said good-bye to him. I went back to the khan. The mountaineers wanted more and still more conversation on war and politics. I told them that if they had one war they were likely to have three, and that you could have too much of a good thing. They then left me to sleep, from which I was awakened by a band that played under my window at two in the morning, while the population let off revolvers. This same sort of thing

happened to me five years ago. I was treated worse then.

*Sunday, August 25, 1912. Novi-Bazar.*—When I got up this morning, Ahmed came to tell me that a telegram had arrived from Issa Boletin, saying that if injury of any kind was done to me, dire vengeance would fall upon those responsible, so my status had now entirely changed and Jack and I were the heroes of the moment. I left the little dog, Paris, and his friend, a very sporting couple, in charge of one of the friendly Albanians. I gave Ahmed Effendi my revolver as a present, as I thought I was probably getting out of the troubled area, and should not be likely to want it again. He pulled out his silver-worked knife to give me, but I refused it. The town was in the market-place to see us meet and go off. It reminded me of going out for yeomanry training, except that the crowd was differently dressed. They were in scarlet-and-yellow jerkins, with red-and-black scarves and dark hoods, and we made a picturesque procession as we moved off, with advance and rear-guards and men riding on the flanks. We sometimes drove and sometimes rode. Rifaat, an immense man, with three brothers as big as himself, came with me. He said that he had, in honourable fight, killed twelve men that summer; that he was the right-hand man of the *mutesarriif*, that his three brothers had also been outlaws for the whole of the summer, and that his father had held a whole regiment at bay. He put his arms round my neck to say so. Some miles out of the town the warrior citizens halted and made a ring and everyone made speeches. I do not think I have ever seen such extraordinarily fine men physically. We all said what we would do next time we met, and they said that if trouble came they would come and seek my *bessa* (protection) in England. They looked like kings in rags. I said to one of the Albanians that I would learn

to speak his language, as we had had to talk through an interpreter, who spoke Albanian. He answered magnificently, "Learn only the names of weapons and we can talk sufficiently." Then most of them went back, but the escort stayed. Going on, we saw one band of Serbs to the south-east, but they sheered off.

The escort and I talked all the way. They all agreed that the murder of Ivan was a calamity and a disgrace. I said that things such as this hurt both Islam and the Christians. The gendarmes said it was the work of ignorant children. These people are, I suppose, the descendants of the Patzinaks who bothered the Crusaders so much. They told me the chief Albanian grievances. There were first of all too many officials and the new régime troubled them more than the old had done; secondly they did not like military service, though there was, no doubt, a good deal to be said for having military service with the Christians. There was also a great deal against it. The Moslems fasted and the Christians did not. The Christians drink and smoke during Ramadan. It was not Christianity that they minded, and that was shown by their readiness, they said, to obey foreign Christian officers. It was the difference of customs of natives. Coming down the Sanjak, I have met several Christian soldiers and they seem to get on very well with the Moslems. I offered one man baksheesh to-day, which he refused, saying, "We do this willingly for the State that we serve; we need no bribes." The others told me that it was because they, the Albanians, were looking that he acted thus, not because he hated foreigners, or through devotion to duty. I am afraid that my escort would not win a prize for morals. Most of them have been in prison—not that that argues crime on their part—and those who have kept out have only done so by the help of their rifles. The gendarmes' complaints were the same as always—bad pay, too



much work, no consideration, long exile ; but the real Albanian complaint, first and last, is that their honour and freedom are not sufficiently considered. I have enjoyed this journey through the Sanjak quite enormously. The first part of it is dull and a little monotonous after the very sensational scenery of Bosnia. The second part of the journey is very rugged, and reminded me slightly of Southern Albania and the Pindus ranges, though there is more life. There are long stretches of range after range of mountains and valleys. One passes a few goats and sheep like chamois, and there are generally eagles high overhead or ravens croaking in the distance. Sienitza is high and flat. From Sienitza the country comes in a long sweep and looks fertile, and is fairly often cultivated. The road to Novi-Bazar is a good road. The town itself is like any Turkish town, perhaps a little more Albanian. Here the Turks are at present in power. I went to the telegraph office to send a telegram home, but could not do it, as the clerk-translator was away at Mitrovitza. There were, however, two Turkish officers there wiring immediately for more troops to go to the front, but the place itself was as peaceful as the Foreign Office, and had the same lack of passion. A couple of loungers, who had followed me in, and I, stood and listened to these official telegrams being dictated. Rifaat has been too tiresome. He is a turbulent ruffian, and I shan't be sorry when he is shot. I have never met a Turk or an Albanian who boasted of the men he had killed before. He has, I believe, twelve jaks (blood-feuds) and he hated walking with me at night in the town of Novi-Bazar, where he is out of his own district and could be killed, anyway for the moment, with impunity, but I must admit that he did walk with me, as he had given his word to do so. The driver, Hadji Salih, said, "*Yureki kopuk dir amma namuzti bir adam*"—his heart is rotten, but he is an

honourable man," and he added, "God preserve me from falling into his hands." He and his brothers are magnificent men to look at, like gigantic Arabs. I gave them a couple of liras and a knife. Ahmed Effendi was the best of the lot. His chief feat, of which he did not speak himself, was to kill a man and a horse at one shot last year. At Novi-Bazar I heard the explanation of the Kaimakam's presence at Sienitza when he was murdered. He had been sent for by the Vali of Uskub, to consult with him, and was crossing to Serbia, as the quickest way to get there.

*Monday, August 26, 1912. Mitrovitza.*—The country to-day was rather like Northern Italy, soft light and soft hills, with purple shadows on them. We started at six, and passed through a belt of purely Christian population. Generally here the creeds are mixed, but sometimes they are in belts. I was met by a lieutenant with thirty men from Mitrovitza. They had had an eight hours' ride to meet me, and would, of course, have another eight to return with me, in this tremendous heat and with a campaign going on. It is the most wicked waste. One man nearly died on the way. He had a fit. I wanted to give him brandy, but the others refused it for him. They were good Moslems. I had him, however, put into our cart. When we arrived at Mitrovitza, the driver Ibrahim, a converted Christian, refused to take him to hospital. I settled master Ibrahim pretty quick. Jack and I had nothing but a little cheese and sour milk from six this morning until eight to-night. Now we have *yaourt* (sour milk), the "butter in a lordly dish" which Jael gave to Sisera, with the intention of making him sleep before she murdered him. It will make us sleep to-night. It is a dish that makes centenarians and saints. Here nobody is talking of anything but the fighting all along the frontier, which is making the people mad. Every *karakol* (guard-house) has gone up in flames along our

frontier ; Moykiovitch and Berana are the last big fights.

*Tuesday, August 27, 1912. Mitrovitza.*—I went again to send a telegram and found the Turkish official extremely rude. He said that no one here knew French and no telegram could be sent. I answered as rudely. I went off to the Kaimakam, Halid Bey, a delightful man—like an English curate—who has seen thirty years of war. As we sat talking, in came the rude Turk, puffing and very angry. When he saw me beside the Kaimakam, he proclaimed himself an unhappy man and said that I had taken words to myself which were intended for another, a quite poor man standing beside me. He said nothing was easier than to send a telegram in any language. I met the Russian Consul in the street. He asked me to play bridge. I don't know the rules.

I shan't forget the last time when I came to Mitrovitza, in the very heart of winter, after the revolution. It was the time of the great prediction of the future of Turkey when its future, in spite of what had happened, still looked golden. I rode to Ipek, in cold such as I had never known, across the most wonderful country. From one mountain one could count a hundred valleys. We slept twenty or more in one room of an enormous khan, with a great fire blazing on the hearth. Even then there were signs of trouble coming. The *hanji*, a huge and fierce Albanian, said to me, "Who knows how all this business is going to turn out?" At Ipek I dined with the Governor and an Albanian Bey, "Sword of the Faith." I asked him at dinner if he had ever seen war. "By God," he said, "of course I have. I am twenty-four." "When was the last time?" said I. "Why, when we drove His Excellency here out of Ipek," he answered. The Turk got angry and said, "Lack of manners is not necessary." Now "Sword of the Faith" has again

been playing a part in war and politics. He has been a strong Committee-man and Ipek did not rise when the general insurrection took place, though the citizens of that town took possession of the powder magazine and of some four thousand rifles ; consequently, there was general anger against Ipek. Riza Bey of Djakova, Issa of Mitrovitza and the Albanians of Prisrend are all furious, and when the *bessa* ends there may be fighting. Meanwhile, "Sword of the Faith," perhaps from patriotism, perhaps to regain the favour that he has lost, has gone off to the frontier and is fighting Montenegro.

I met the Austrian and the Russian Consuls together. They were not very friendly to each other, though very nice to me. When we were alone, the Russian said that the Austrian annexation of the Sanjak would certainly be a *casus belli*. He told me that his life had been threatened. In the afternoon, I went to the factory of Nedjib Bey Draga, and saw his brother and many others. They all of them think that the Committee is beaten, but they do not want autonomy. It is freedom, more than independence, that they are after. There is no doubt that the C.U.P. have made an awful mess of the Albanian business, and so have their generals. These people can be handled and have very fine things about them.

I saw Djavid Pasha, who was friendly and put a room at my disposal. He was not very communicative. I told him what had happened at Sienitza. His own position is, of course, very difficult here, for the Albanians have fought the Turks to a standstill, and it is this Montenegrin trouble that is largely responsible for the quasi-peace that is existing between the Turks and the Albanians to-day. Even now, the Albanians sent between half a dozen and a dozen Turkish officials packing from Mitrovitza the other day. I said to the general that Issa Boletin had telegraphed about me to

Sienitza and that I wished to thank him for doing so, to which he agreed politely.

Here are six of the most important Albanian points :

1. The Albanians to have schools where they like, and Albanian taught in them.
2. Officials in Albania must know Albanian.
3. More attention to be paid to religion.
4. Guns for all, Christians and Mahommedans alike.
5. Agricultural schools, under certain conditions.
6. The impeachment of Hakki Pasha.

I think the condition of Mitrovitza is very bad and dangerous to the Christians, owing to all this fighting ; but the good-class Moslems are honest and honourable men who are doing the best they can. They say that Mehmed Pasha will be re-elected ; Amir of Akova will not. There are many differences of opinion, more than quarrels, amongst the Albanians themselves. They are all anxious to tide over this extremely difficult time, so full of uncertainty and danger to them all. They think that the Turkish Government will grant their demands. I saw Don Nikola Mazarek, a most delightful Austrian priest. The murders going on between here and Ipek are bad and of a very brutal kind. Then I went to dine with the Austrians. In the middle of dinner I received a mysterious message to say that Issa Boletin was waiting for me outside the town. I thought it quite useless to make a *secret de Polichinelle*. The Austrians knew what had happened at Sienitza and would certainly know of my meeting with Issa, so I told the truth, that I was going to thank him, and left.

It was a perfect night outside, with an enormous full moon, in a cloudless sky. Hadji Salih was waiting with an unnecessary lamp, and we walked quickly through the streets outside the town to a khan, where Issa had come to meet me. He was surrounded by

numbers of his wild Albanian mountaineers, covered with weapons. They made a fine picture in the moonlight. I waited in the courtyard. One or two of them came up to talk to me ; they were generally very aloof, but seemed to be tingling with excitement. Then I was shown upstairs, and outside on the landing was another crowd of be-weaponed Albanians. The walls were all hung round with arms. I went into a fair-sized room, where I found Issa Boletin, a very tall, lithe, well-made Albanian, aquiline, with restless eyes and a handsome, fierce face, in the Gheg dress. One of his sons, the eldest of nine, he said, a very handsome boy, stayed in the room to interpret in Italian, which proved unnecessary. He turned the others out, except for one man, and we sat down on a low divan in the window. I first of all thanked him for having sent the telegram, and said I thought it was a great pity that the poor Kaimakam had been murdered. With this he entirely agreed, and said he was sorry that I had been put to any inconvenience. The people had been through terribly hard times and could not be expected always to be informed or to act wisely. He said the Albanians loved England and he hoped the English liked the Albanians. I asked, "Did the Albanians want autonomy?" "No," he said, "they did not; what they wanted was not to be interfered with." "Do you want union," I said, "between the north and the south?" "Well," he said, "we are one people"; but he went on to say that the union would not be advantageous to the north, for the Tosks, the southerners, were more educated and clever than the northerners. Albania wished to be under the Sultan, but the Albanians must have arms to defend their country, and these arms had been taken from them by the foolish Turks. When the *bessa* (truce) ended at Bairam, he could not say what was going to happen. It was all incalculable. The Albanians would have

liked to have fought the Italians. (There they joined with the Turks.) But they could not do this without a fleet. I said there were great difficulties in the way of ending the war, but its prolongation meant the danger of the disruption of Turkey and therefore great danger to Albania. Surely the best policy for the Albanians was to make an honourable peace as quickly as they could? He asked me what was our British interest in the Turkish-Italian War? I said our interest was that we were the greatest Moslem power and that we wanted to end a situation that was very painful to many of our Moslem fellow-subjects. Also, the disruption of Turkey would mean to us that coasts would be taken, forts and harbours made by other countries not as friendly to us as Turkey. At this point a couple of shots went off under the window. I was interested in the conversation and paid no attention. Issa pulled back a little curtain and looked out into the moonlight. As he did so, a dozen shots rang out just outside. Instantly his clansmen swarmed into the room, taking arms down from the wall. They walked upon dancing feet and their eyes glittered. Issa jumped up with a rifle in his hand and said to me, "The house is surrounded by the Turks. I am going to fight my way out." I said to him, "This is not my quarrel, but I will come with you, as if you are taken the Turks will not shoot you if I am there." He said. "No, you are my guest. My honour will not allow this thing. You protect my son." Issa and his men poured out. Some stayed and kept me in.

They were back again almost at once. It had, apparently, been only a brawl outside—Turks, they said—and nobody hurt. I am very glad that I saw it. It was wonderful, the way in which the clansmen formed round Issa Boletin. They were like men on springs, active and lithe as panthers. It is no wonder that these people have got these bright, restless

eyes, for a slow glance must often mean death to them.

This interlude rather upset our business talk; though the house had not been surrounded by the Turks, they were obviously nervous, after what had happened. Issa spoke again of the Albanian's relations to the Turks. They—he was speaking for his kind—admired the Sultan and did not wish to leave his rule. What else for them was there, but to be dominated by Serbs and Montenegrins? He asked me if, when I went back to England, I would do what I could to help his people. I said that I would most gladly do all in my power, because I admired the Albanian people and I liked and admired him very greatly. We then said good-bye and I walked back, the Albanians accompanying me until we came to where the Turkish soldiers were waiting. The Turks walked back with Hadji Salih and myself to the municipal room which Djavid Pasha had given me.

## THE ALBANIAN COMMITTEE

At the conclusion of the Balkan War, when Turkey-in-Europe was shattered, refugees, rather than representatives, came to England to make the desperate case known. The representatives from Macedonia, who had been accustomed all their lives to murder and brutality, still had a pathetic belief in the justice of the Great Powers. They could not realise that the world would not admit that it had any obligation to incur risk or expense in healing wounds or repairing ruins. England might be ready to go to war to protect her own people or for her own ends, but she was not prepared to take up arms for a mosaic of mixed and broken peoples. The Macedonians



asked for mercy. It was not fair to expect it, for Prime Ministers and Chancellors of the Exchequer are not selected for the qualities that adorn knight-errants. The Great Powers were animal in their lusts, Pharisees in their aspirations.

The Albanian Deputation arrived, composed of men of three different creeds—Orthodox Greek, Catholic and Moslem. At the head of it was Ismail Kemal Bey, a kindly and a versatile man, whose life had been a long and a precarious see-saw. His weakness lay in his circumstances and in his affection for his children. If he was tortuous, it was because it was difficult to be straight in his position. Impecuniosity was his taskmaster, and upon occasion he had to reconcile inconvenient convictions with convenient conduct, to the prejudice of the former.

He was the disciple of Midhat Pasha, Governor-General of Beirout, Governor-General of Crete, nominated Governor of Tripoli, Counsellor of and refugee from the Sultan, editor, Anglophile, friend of Chinese Gordon, child of adventure; he was also a tired and broken old man, advocate of a broken country.

He was an excellent raconteur, and I admired his stories of himself and of others. Once, after he had fled, as David from the wrath of Saul, before the anger of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, there had been a documentary reconciliation between them while he was abroad. The Sultan had offered to make him extra-Ambassador to all countries—so said Ismail Kemal, who did not accept this unusual post.

Upon another occasion, when the New Testament had been translated from sonorous, traditional Greek into Romaic, a riot had occurred in Athens, and some tens or scores of Athenians had been killed. The Press of Athens had then requested Ismail Kemal to explain this phenomenon to Europe, and to exculpate the Athenians. How far he succeeded, I do not know,

but the behaviour of the people of Athens in their sanguinary protests against the translation of the Bible into modern Greek is not as unreasonable as it appears. A colleague of mine in Constantinople said, "Well, would you like to see written in the New Testament, instead of 'And it came to pass,' 'Now this is 'ow it 'appened'?"

I knew Ismail Kemal Bey in his old age, when he was like a wise and benevolent tortoise. He had in him a real liberalism that never faded, but which became encrusted with the slovenliness of his own nature, and the weary deviations from straightness to which circumstances forced him. He was canny, and he was able; and he had the power of phrasing his caniness crisply. If Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had married a Bulgarian peasant and throughout his life had been forced to avoid the bastinado by placating Abdul Hamid, and had often found it difficult to obtain lodging for the night and to pay for it, he might have had much in common with Ismail Kemal Bey.

Other outstanding figures of the Albanian Deputation were Monsignor Fan Noli and Faik Bey Konitza, who represented the Vatra, the Federation of the Albanians of America. His brother, Mehmed Bey Konitza, now Albanian Minister in London, had been in the Turkish Diplomatic Service. Monsieur Philippe Nogga was a Catholic, and was as devoted to music as to politics.

The most picturesque figure of the Deputation was Issa Bey Boletin, the Robin Hood of Albania. He was an uneducated man, with a great and a just reputation for courage and resource. His deeds had become legends, and his escapes from Turks and Serbs, fables. He was lost and homesick in London, for he could not speak a word of English. He used to spend many hours in my house, drinking Turkish

coffee. I constantly received at the House of Commons agitated telephone calls from my wife, and, on returning, I often found her and Issa speechless, but bowing to each other at short intervals.

The question of the partition of Albania was canvassed in the Press. A public meeting was called at the Connaught Rooms, and a Committee formed, of which I was made President. Those who took the principal part in the work of the Committee were Mr. C. F. Ryder, Mr. Mark Judge, Mr. J. C. Paget and Major Paget. Major Paget, who had lived at Scutari, and I were the only two who had actual acquaintance with the country; the others were prompted by a generous love of freedom. Later, Miss Durham, who had devoted years of work to Albania, and whose name is a household word from North to South, joined us, and Captain Evan MacRury.

We had continuous and intimate relations with the Albanians, and we were, I think, instrumental in obtaining advantages for the country which she would otherwise have lacked.

The Albanians who came to England produced an excellent impression. Upon one occasion, Mr. Lloyd George lunched with me, to meet them, and after lunch Toni Precha, of the Albanian Restaurant, and I acted as interpreters between Issa Bey and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

"Tell him," said Issa, "that I am a mountaineer, as he is, and that I know that his heart is kind to those who suffer." He wound up fiercely with, "And say that when spring comes, we will manure the plains of Kossovo with the bones of the Serbs, for we Albanians have suffered too much to forget."

I thought it wise to soften the last phrase, but Mr. Lloyd George was delighted with the tall highlander, in whom he thought he recognised a kindred spirit, and was kind to him.

It was not only Mr. Lloyd George who was kind at that time (though never after) to the Albanians ; there were many others. Long after Issa had returned to Northern Albania, I read in the newspapers that he had been captured by the Serbs in a guerrilla fight. I knew the Serbs and their way of dealing with their prisoners, and felt sure that his obituary notice would soon follow, and I hurried to the Foreign Office.

The Foreign Office said, quite reasonably, that they were not in a position to take any steps, but that if I was anxious to save the life of my friend I had better persuade some great man to plead his cause. I went to Lord Cromer, who said abruptly, " Now, what is all this business about ? Is it politics, or is it a case of helping a friend of yours ? If it is a friend of yours I will do what I can." I said that it was a case of helping a friend of mine, who had been very good to me, and who would certainly die unless there was immediate intervention on his behalf. We then drafted a telegram to the following effect :

" To His Majesty, King Peter of Serbia. It is reported in the Press here that the Albanian Issa Bey Boletin has been made prisoner by Your Majesty's troops. Issa Bey Boletin was in London for a considerable time, and gained the respect and confidence of many distinguished people, and I venture to ask Your Majesty to show the clemency of strength, which will surely be appreciated.—CROMER."

The next day, when my morning papers arrived, I was glad yet horrified to read the following account :

" Yesterday it was stated in the ——— that Issa Boletinatz had been taken prisoner by the Serbs. The contrary appears to be the case. This noted leader of banditti has inflicted a heavy defeat upon the combined forces of the Serbs and the Montenegrins."

I was very glad to know that my friend was alive ; but I regretted having induced Lord Cromer to send a telegram that must have surprised King Peter. Later in the day Lord Cromer called me up on the telephone and said, with some asperity, " Why did you get me to appeal for this conqueror ? " It was like Lord Cromer to lend his generous help in all ways to the younger generation. His kindness to his juniors was unending. I had many talks with him on the possible future of Albania, always hoping that another such as he might make of it a white Egypt.

The Albanian Committee did what it could to entertain, besides politically helping, the Albanians in England. One afternoon Issa Bey came with us to the Zoo. As we drove down Regent Street, there were posters up, " Assassination of Niaisi by the son of Issa Boletin." The members of the Albanian Committee who had not been in Albania were more surprised, and perhaps more shocked, than I by these tidings. They believed that this must be another libel upon a defenceless people.

" Tell him," they said, " what is on this placard."

I said to Issa Bey, " It is written on those walls that your son has killed Niaisi. Do you believe this ? "

" What difference," answered Issa cautiously, " is it going to make to me if this has happened ? "

I said, " None. We don't like murder in this country, but one cannot be blamed for what one's relations do."

" Then," said Issa, " I think it is highly probable. I know my son was as determined to kill Niaisi as Niaisi was to kill him."

We went on to the Zoo, and when we had been round Issa said : " You have all things in cages here, except the Devil. I like freedom."

In the House of Commons he produced a great

effect in his national costume, for none could look at him without admiration. He was much struck by Lord Treowen, who met him in uniform, and was very anxious to take him, willy nilly, back to Albania. He made many friends, who showed him the glories of London. "And yet," said he to me, "grand as it all is, and kind as you English are, I would not change this for my own rocks and rivers."

In the end, Issa Boletin was murdered while he was a prisoner at Podgoritzza. He had the simplicity of a child and was a strong man of consistent courage, and was always true to his salt. He made one understand the gentleness as well as the roughness of the Middle Ages. I heard the account of his death from a companion. The quarrel was not his. He went to the rescue of a nephew, who had foolishly sought trouble. Issa killed eight men before he died. He fired quite steadily, badly wounded, from the ground, telling his friend, a civilian, how to take cover from the Montenegrins. Those who were his friends will not forget him.

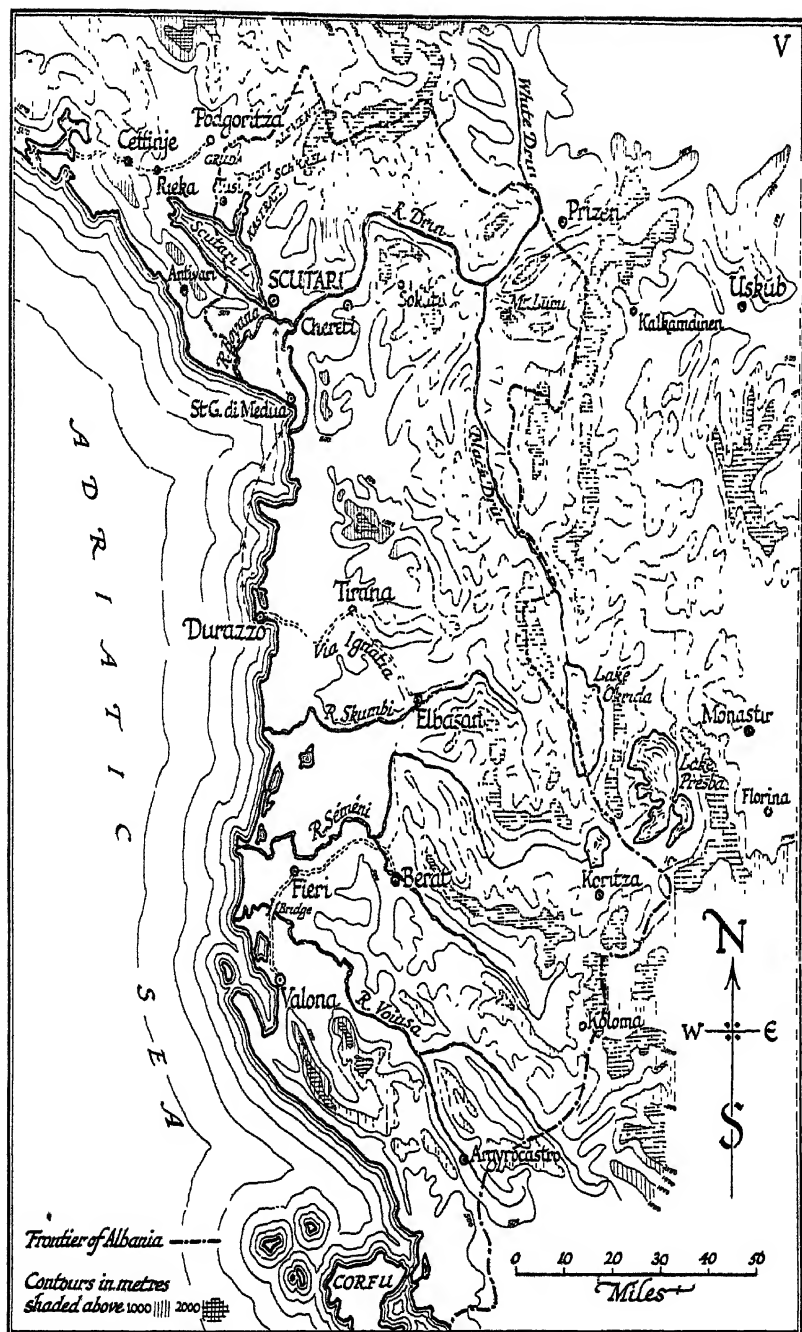
The Albanian Committee passed through difficult times. It was a light canoe negotiating fierce rapids. Because some Albanians were Mahommedans, political Mahommedans from the Gold Coast and many parts of the world came to the meetings of the unfortunate Committee, and taxed to the utmost the intelligence of the Chairman. The Ali brothers from India attended regularly, when they were in England, and I here put it on record that Mahommed Ali, who has since served a long sentence for sedition, was always courteous and never went beyond the Chairman's ruling. My experience of him made me wonder if his case had been wisely dealt with in India.

Albanians were Catholics, and Catholics, too, found an opportunity to vent their grievances against the British Government. These meetings had their brighter

side, especially when Lord Newton attended them. Once, when he was criticising the Liberal Government that he disliked, he made a characteristic epigram. "Sir Edward Grey," said he, "is a phenomenon in our national life. He is above criticism. He is something between the laws of first-class cricket and the Ten Commandments."

The time came when these public meetings did little good to Albania, and were exhausting to those who were responsible for them, and it was found better to hold our discussions without inviting that public which came only to express its own irrelevant grievances; the Albanian Committee did not have to complain of the way in which it was treated by the Government or by the Press. Those pre-War days were Christian, and the howling cannibals of 1919 had not yet been loosed upon the suffering world. President Wilson's Fourteen Points had not been thought of, because, on the whole, they were unnecessary. In spite of the intrigues of the Great Powers, the world was not too bad a place, and the Albanians, in England at any rate, received a fair hearing through the Albanian Committee, which tried to be, if not impartial, as moderate as possible.

Very little was known about Albania. The general impression was that the Albanians were another branch of the Armenian family, and indeed, as far as massacres were concerned, this was most understandable, for the unarmed, pastoral Albanians of the South were massacred by the Greeks in 1913, while the Albanians of the North-West received the same treatment at the hands of the Serbs. Miss Durham, Nevinson and MacRury travelled over the country and wrote their accounts of what was taking place, and these were published in *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Morning Post* and the *Daily News*. Sir Edward Grey was always courteous and listened to facts and







figures that were not official and did all in his power to mitigate the sufferings of the Albanians. In the face of strong opposition, he recognised publicly that the Albanians had the same right to nationality and autonomy as any other people in the Balkans. The Greeks had been helped by Byron, and the Slav nations had Russia behind them. The Serbs and the Bulgars had the liberal inheritance of Gladstone's speeches and the active support of the Buxtons and the Balkan Committee, and the Albanians, who were the smallest in population and the most ineffectively equipped, received their title-deeds, which their neighbours would have stolen from them, at the hands of Lord Grey. Albania was once again to owe her existence to an Englishman, when, in 1921, on the initiative of Lord Robert Cecil, she entered the League of Nations.

### HOTI AND GRUDA

At the end of 1913 peace had been concluded between the Turks and the Balkan States, and, for a time, war between the Balkan Allies had ceased. War had, for a moment, been worth while at all events for the victors. But Roumania, after behaving like a discreet and dowager hyena, and watching her neighbours gradually bleeding down to weakness, in the end obtained a share of the lion's portion. She annexed the Dobrudj, which was surrendered by the Bulgars, who, thanks to the gaucherie and fanaticism of Dr. Daneff, had been attacked by her former allies.

Greece had taken Western Thrace, though M. Venizelos, who on that occasion had been left to himself to make the peace terms he considered wisest, had agreed to the retention of Western Thrace by

Bulgaria, which allowed her trade an exit to the Ægean. But Albania, for whose liberty and for whose benefit the war had largely been undertaken, according to the earlier statements of leading Serbs and Montenegrins, was now to suffer most heavily. In the north her land was overrun and her people were robbed and murdered by Serbs and Montenegrins, while the Greeks occupied large areas of the south.

The Albanian Committee, and Members of Parliament interested in Albania, received innumerable and very pathetic appeals from Albanians. These unfortunates were the victims both of international legislation and of active and very severe persecution. They were suffering first of all because their country was compressed behind frontiers that made economic life impossible.

Albania was left her rocks and her mountain torrents, but where she had quarried her rocks, and turned them into houses, her market towns were taken from her; and where the torrents met the plains, irrigating and fertilising, she was deprived of her land and the fruits of her labour.

The frontier, which Lord Fitzmaurice, a careful Englishman and a complete neutral, had assigned to her in 1870, had included the vilayets of Scutari, most of Kossovo and part of Monastir. It appeared that she must now lose three-fifths of this and enter upon her career as a State mutilated from her birth. What hope could there be for a people whose country was deprived of the possibility of economic life? Such a State must surely become either a beggar or a brigand, and live by charity or by loot.

This vivisection of an economic and political unit fell with unusual hardship upon the tribes known as the Five Banners of the North, Hoti, Gruda, Shkreli, Klementi and Kastrati. Most of these tribes were Catholics, and home-dwellers, for they practised im-

migration less than other Albanians. There are probably no finer men in Europe from the point of view of courage and physique. They had definitely sworn that they would stand by each other; that they would not suffer Hoti and Gruda to be partitioned, or submit to the alternative of those two tribes either passing over to the rule of Montenegro or of being deprived of their pasture-lands.

The south was threatened with the same disasters as the north, and, indeed, such disasters it had already suffered. It was with the object of inquiring into these circumstances that I went to Albania in 1913. I kept a rather irregular diary, which I have as far as possible revised, of my journey.

On Saturday, August 23, 1913, I arrived at Brindisi, where Commander Bayle, of H.M.S. *Kennet*, met me, and we steamed over to the Albanian coast, that lay sweltering under a torrid sun. The war had driven many of the Albanians from the highlands down to this poisonous coast, where fever came to end their sufferings. Their lives in recent years have been an unceasing torture, and I constantly heard the Turkish proverb upon the lips of those who talk the language, "Death is the comforter of the poor."

An Italian boat plied between the mouth of the shallow Boyana and Scutari. On the banks were the ruins of houses and of men. A fierce pilot, Arslan Ibrahim, talked to me. He pointed to the heights of Tarabosh and told how he had fought hand-to-hand, with bayonets, for twenty-four hours. "But," he said, "the Montenegrins were *temiz* (clean)." He declared that Hoti and Gruda could not fight, and he blew into his hand to show how the Montenegrins would scatter those two tribes. I heard later that he was supposed to be in the pay of Montenegro.

On arriving, I went straight to the house which Major Paget had built years before, and where Admiral

and Lady Burney were staying, and lunched. The Admiral had a difficult task. He had been put in command of a small international force, which the Powers had stationed in Albania, pending the frontier decisions, in order to prevent aggression on the part of Montenegro or Serbia. At home people knew very little of the Albanian question and were chary of coming to decisions on a very thorny subject. The Admiral's jurisdiction went only a little way outside the town, and he had it in his power to bind certain tribes to peace, not others. It was difficult to know what to do when the free tribes attacked men of the tribes who were bound. The funds for administrative purposes were practically non-existent, and a Commission commands little respect. One man was needed to guide and to control; the Commission was in constant disagreement.

I found Scutari less changed than I expected, though a number of houses had been shelled. My old friend M. Summa, the Consul, had been wounded in the British Consulate, and up till now he had received nothing from the Foreign Office but a grant of £10. The streets had been renamed after battleships and admirals. The town was as lovely as ever, with its green doors and its high-walled gardens, and the people had not abandoned their picturesque and beautiful dress—the braided trousers and the flowing fustanella, and the great mane that falls like hair, and not like silk from the flat Albanian fez.

I had remembered the town as being lovely, but not as lovely as this. The heat was quivering and tremendous. Gendarmes walked about in the Albanian dress, with men of the Yorkshire Regiment and with Italians. Old Albanians loitered outside the café, which one of them called "*Moitié chantant*," to see English and Italian soldiers dancing together.

I dined with Admiral Burney. There were a

number of people there who talked of the burning question of Hoti and Gruda, the two districts which Montenegro means to take. They discussed possibilities of preventing bloodshed. Would Montenegro take £100,000 for Hoti and Gruda? If so, who was to pay it? Was it possible to exchange territory? No one thought so.

*Monday, August 25, 1913.*—I walked about the town this morning and saw a number of people. There is a great deal of intrigue going on. I didn't care for some of the Scutarenes last time I was here, though many are friendly and hospitable. It is said that Montenegro is spending much money in the town on propaganda.

The mountaineers are fine men. I met Ded Gion Luli, with a retinue of giants behind him. He said that they had made up their minds to fight Montenegro and that they wanted no talk of compromise. He would be very honoured if I went up for the Festa of the Five Banners. He said that his people had been cruelly treated, that they had suffered injustice because they were poor; but few and small as they were they might still effect their purpose. Nothing would make them give up.

I answered, if they were determined to fight, then there was nothing more to be said. They could only win or lose. If they won against the strength of Montenegro, well and good, but it would be advisable to consider now what they should do if they lost. It would be a good thing to write to the Government at Valona and ask for land. "Wise counsels," said he; "our blood is hot." He had as his companion a splendid mountaineer, at least six foot four, with a face grim as Ulster, chiselled by Praxiteles.

I dined with Miss Durham, under an olive tree in her garden, and had a very interesting talk. I was very

glad to meet her, after all I had heard of her ; her name is a legend in the mountains. She has grand courage and wit to match it.

She told me many vivid stories of the beginning of the war. She had been pro-Serb and pro-Montenegrin, and it was only their revolting cruelty that turned her affection into acute dislike. She nursed in their hospitals, but her chief work had been refugee work amongst the Albanians, and very few people can have as many saved lives to their credit as she. She has got a real passion for the country and the people and a fine imaginative way of putting things.

*Tuesday, August 26, 1913.*—I took a small dark man of the Shalah tribe, Domenico or Deli, as my servant, and we went this morning to the Consulate, where M. Summa ordered three horses for me for Friday. I shall ride up to Tusi, where the Montenegrins are. I wonder what sort of a reception I shall get. The hatred of them in Scutari is very bitter. They bombarded the Cathedral during the siege, and in the town they took everything that was portable. There is a small 18-inch gauge tramline, which the Turks laid down. The Montenegrins claimed it, though the labour of removing it will only leave them  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in farthings. The people here say that, if they could, they would take the very paving-stones, though Montenegro itself is nothing but a pile of rocks.

The colour was very vivid to-day upon the glorious mountains, and the women trooping in were as beautiful. They are tall and graceful and move like ships, and have the calmest beauty that I know.

One Christian and one Moslem deputation came to see me. The Christians were chiefly concerned in the future Constitution of Albania. It was rather like eagles being interested in their cage. They talked about ministerial responsibility and made epigrams.

They said that their king, when he came, would be their guest.

Faik Bey Konitza came with the Moslems, and attacked the Government of Ismail Kemal with vigour and eloquence. The Moslems, too, were interested in the Constitution. They said that they must have a Foreign Minister who was responsible to Parliament. They had known cases of Foreign Ministers who were not, and who had been manipulated by other Governments. They were also anxious to start propaganda in Greece to reclaim Albanians who had become Hellenised. I protested: "You have only miraculously escaped from political annihilation and you may have another war. Do leave foreign propaganda alone. The Albanians round Athens are quite happy and won't thank you. You make your own country safe first, then there will be a substance that can throw a shadow." They were magnificent men to look at, and I accepted their invitation to dine with them. There was some feeling between them and the Christians. They complained that the Christians smoked in the streets in Ramadan.

I said: "Insults between fellow-subjects are a reproach and a pity, but it is much worse to be insulted by a foreign master. If you don't unite, you will be under the Montenegrins, and you won't like that. Your enemies abroad say that you Moslems and Christians cannot get on together. Your friends say that you can. You ought to justify your friends." They agreed, and I left them.

I lunched with Admiral Burney. He is a just man. I dined with Major Phillips, who commands the Yorkshires. He told me of his march from Medua, with only one day's rations through unceasing pelting rain. On the road he passed 2,500 starving Turks, but not a man of them sick, he said, and all well-behaved and admirably disciplined.



Phillips is a very remarkable man. He has fallen completely under the spell of Albania and loves the people, with whom he gets on extremely well. He has a poet's imagination and he is a most amusing conversationalist.

The Yorkshires had got hardly any furniture, but beautiful plate. I was standing with a golden goblet in my hand with a drink in it, talking to Phillips, when a letter came from the Admiral asking me to go round and see him. I had nowhere to put the goblet down, so having had my drink, put it in my pocket—then opened the letter, and said a hurried good-bye to Phillips. I was proceeding to leave, forgetting the golden goblet in my pocket, when I was stopped by the mess-president, whose eyes popped out of his head with excitement, saying, "Sir, you've got our goblet in your pocket!"

*Wednesday, August 28, 1913.* I rode out with Admiral Burney, Lady Burney, Mrs. Gotto, her daughter, Green, commandant of the Gendarmerie, Loewenfeldt, the Austrian, and Henley, to the house of Mirash Lutzi.

Two Kastrati men were reported to have killed two Moslems. The Kastrati had taken the *bessa*.<sup>1</sup> The Admiral was very angry. I translated for him, first to Mirash Lutzi, who said it was Hoti, not Kastrati, who was responsible. The Admiral offered £100 for the capture of the men. Mirash Lutzi is a great and picturesque figure in the country. His son told me that he had killed twenty-five Turks and had taken forty prisoners. We were well and hospitably received in the house. The women kissed our hands. We were given an excellent meal, and what is exceptional in the East, we were not made to wait hours for it. There were many speeches. I translated, sometimes in Turkish and sometimes in Italian. Mirash Lutzi ended by saying, "God gave all religions to men, so we

<sup>1</sup> Agreed to the armistice.

must respect the faith of each other." It is a pity that this sentiment is nearly always an afterthought—after trouble has happened.

Then we rode on fast to other villages, where charred walls still stood but roofs were gone. Women refugees still lingered without shelter and without food, and children all but naked. We gave money to them. The land is a land of graves.

We turned our horses and came home slowly, but the Admiral galloped ahead, and had a bad fall going over rough ground.

The news when we got back was that the incident of last night was the result of the feeling that Scutari had insulted the Mountains, and two Scutarenes had, therefore, to be killed. The mountaineers first picked two merchants of Valona by mistake; they were persuaded with much difficulty not to kill them. (The merchants took the greatest pains to prove their case.) The Admiral was told that two Moslems had sat and shared their melons with sixteen Christians, who examined their guns. When they got hold of the guns, they turned upon the Moslems and beat one man nearly to death, but there had been no killing. This seems to be what really happened.

In the evening, Loewenfeldt, the Austrian, told stories of the courage of the Montenegrins. In the war, he said, they could not keep men upon the lines of communication, because they all rushed to the fighting line, so the Montenegrin commanders told them that if they left their duty of keeping the lines and were found killed beyond them, their families would have all their property confiscated. They liked close fighting and hated shooting at more than half a mile.

*Friday, August 29, 1913.*—I dined with the Germans. In the middle of dinner, there was shooting outside. Some houses in the town had caught fire. I went to the spot and interpreted between different lots,

English, Austrian, French, Italian, etc. The French stood about and talked, but did nothing. The Germans and the English worked hard, but the Germans were very rough with the people. I made all arrangements to leave to-morrow.

*Saturday, August 30, 1913.*—I came out very early this morning. The air was cool and scented beyond belief. We galloped along to Bardanjolt past Montenegrin graves, past burnt Kopliko and an arid strip of land, where the hedges were full of dog-roses, cistus and honeysuckle (ladies' hands, the Turks call it) and fields sweet as English meadows.

Burnt houses seem more stark and gruesome when the country round them is soft and fertile. We stopped at the house of Mirash Lutzi, where we found them digging up hidden ammunition in preparation for the coming fight with the Montenegrins. It was tremendously hot. The children were naked. We were bathed in sweat as we climbed the mountain. After a long ride, which I would not have shortened by one minute, we found a cool cave in the hills, with crystal water in it, and there we drank and talked while the Albanians showed me their red-and-black sashes. "That," they said, "was the only way we could show our allegiance to our country. The Turks never noticed that." They sang patriotic songs, always against Montenegro, till the mountain echoed again. "Aaooo *Karadagh*" (Montenegro). Every lovely, glittering valley had its own story, the old story of five hundred years, retold differently except in the point of blood in the last four years. Every peak had its memory, but what years make romantic the day makes terrible. One can almost feel the vengeance in the air. All the houses are roofless; in the mountains the Turks have destroyed; in the plains the Montenegrins have made ruins.

But the men of the Black Mountain have not worked

the same destruction upon the Catholics as they have upon the Moslem villages. They looted many Catholic houses, cut the noses off the saints in churches and fired at the Crucifix, but they did not murder or destroy. The Catholics say this was not out of kindness to them ; it was only prudence on the part of the Montenegrins. A priest I met told me that he had seen the Moslem prisoners at Tusi, who had had their noses cut off. He had no illusions about the kindness of Montenegro. They have no doubt what their fate will be if the Montenegrins come.

A young man, lithe as a panther, acted as our guide. News of our coming had been sent ahead, and below the village of Rapsha we met a company of twenty-five mountaineers, waiting for us ; we sat down and drank beer with them. They constantly let off revolvers. They were all very polite and hospitable and refused to allow me to pay for this entertainment, which was perfect.

We arrived at Rapsha at six, a high mountain village, in the full glory of the evening, having been about eleven hours on the road. There were two priests, Padre Sebastian, a kind, good man, the other one was sulky. A huge *voivoda* (chieftain) of Kastrati, Jelos Joka, was there, a man who looked as if he had no more humour in him than granite, but proved really a wit and a merry-maker.

I was given Father Sebastian's room, which was full of rifles, breviaries, *raki* bottles and books of holy sermons. Another *voivoda*, one of the fiery leaders of the mountains, bowed himself out of the common room and we sat down to dinner. All the *talk* was of Hoti and Gruda. The arguments were fiery as the *raki* that the Albanians drank. "It is ours. It is our land. Why should we give it up ? Europe has trespassed on our rights before, because we were poor, or because she was ignorant. She has failed. She will fail again.

The frontier is white with the bones of our ancestors. Are we lesser men than they ? If Montenegro has Hoti and Gruda, she holds the gateway of Albania, a gateway for her warriors and a door for her politicians. They have cheated us, for they said their war with the Turks was a war of freedom. Is Europe now going to pay them the wages of their treachery with the money of the man they have already robbed ? Montenegro is poor. Is it she that is going to bring civilisation to us, who are poor too ? She will come here to rob. She will use her halfpennies to steal our farthings. We have held our own for five hundred years. We will not give way now. The Turks were better than the Montenegrins and we held our own. Are we to give way ? We of the Five Tribes have sworn to fight for our lives, and our brothers will join us."

During the meal the priests served their guests. They gave them drink and food and cigarettes, and occasionally went out to fire a revolver-shot in answer to another one in the valley. They joined in all the jokes and seemed to me to have a tremendous grip upon their fierce flock. The priests were generally Albanian by nationality, but most of them had been educated in Austria. It is to her they look, for they are supported by Austrian money. They wear moustaches, according to the Eastern custom. At Rapsha they were against the Government at Valona. I should not be surprised if they did not attempt to declare a government of the North. Faik Bey Konitza, Salih Hoja, Bairam Tsur, Issa Boletin, are all at it.

This morning was perfect, and at dawn the earth was like Paradise. Later, the heat became fierce. All this Sunday a loud hail of revolver shots rained up and down the valley. The rocks acted as telephones ; news came and went. There had been an uncomfortable atmosphere at breakfast of sulkiness, a rare

occurrence amongst Albanians. I discovered later from Don Sebastian that the reason of this was the presence of A—— who was with me. Three or four years ago the Albanians had sworn an oath upon the Cross to fight alone against the Turks, without the Montenegrins, and A—— is said to have betrayed them at Podgoritzza. He had also behaved badly in the matter of blood-feuds, for he killed one Moslem half a mile from here, which was in order, but knowing that he would be in blood with the relations of this Moslem, he went and shot two others the same afternoon, which was not considered to be playing the game. He deserved death. I said I should be much obliged if they would not shoot him while he was with me. They could tell him to go. They said there was no question of their shooting him, for the truce was on and they were honourable men. If he had killed five of their number, they would not have touched him, but they resented his presence and wanted me to get rid of him. I said I could not intervene in their quarrels when I was without information. It might be as they said—again, it might not. If they wanted him to go, they must say so themselves. After this, the air cleared, and they became cheerful. They all sang songs, solos and in chorus, in the house of the priest. The songs were against Montenegro. The chieftains sometimes went outside and danced with the people and the children. We breakfasted at 11, and went to Mass about 12. There were five hundred mountaineers of the Five Tribes, men and women, in their fine clothes, all seated under the shade of one enormous plane-tree, that stood outside the smoke-blackened shell of a little church, which the Turks had burnt.

There were two Moslems at Mass. One of them was a *bairakdar* (standard-bearer) of Hoti, and belonged to the only Mussulman family in the town. He prayed to St. John like the best of Catholics, by whom he had

been protected when the Montenegrins came to Rapsha. Another Moslem, Sali Hoja, and I sat in the shade of the church wall, for the heat was terrible. He began to smoke a cigarette during the Elevation, but remembered, and good manners stopped him. The Ave, in Albanian, made music across the mountains, and from down the valley there came revolver shots, which the priests, hastening from Mass, answered with their own revolvers.

The Albanians had been celebrating the Feast of St. John liberally and some of them were none too sober. My servant Deli was one of these. "*Tanti ubbriaconi*," said he, "*e nessuna barufa! Che brava gente!*" "So many merry and not a scuffle! What a good people!" It was a wonderful crowd to behold; fierce, lithe, beautiful, unmistakable children of the precipices, sons of the eagle, with tireless legs for wings. After Mass, which ended with a passionate sermon that seemed part of the scorching air, they asked me to speak.

The Montenegrin frontier was three miles away, and the whole Albanian population was in a state of acute excitement. I was afraid that anything I said would only make the situation worse, and that if Montenegrins were killed I should be accused of having fomented trouble, so I said hastily to those nearest to me that I would not speak. I was dragged from the shadow of the church into the shadow of the plane-tree, and they said, if I would make no speech, I must at least listen to their answers to certain questions which I must ask. I said that was a strange way to do things. I would ask my own questions.

"Do you want to be Montenegrins?" said I. They roared and roared again and spoke with furious eloquence, pointing across the scorching chasm to the frontier. I was afraid that all their words would be imputed to me and said that I would speak to a few

selected chiefs, but that was no good. They said, "We live or we die together, and if some can hear, all can hear." I harangued them in French, which was translated by an educated doctor into Albanian.

"I am an Englishman, but I am not speaking for England. You have many friends in England, who are glad that Albania has been saved, for we have always fought for freedom and you have always fought for freedom, and now you have achieved it. For five hundred years you have worn black in mourning for Skenderbeg ; soon, I hope, with the help of God, you will wear coats of white for your King. Uncertainty is trying, but patience conquers all things. You have been patient for so long ; be patient a little longer. It is not my business to offer you advice. It is in England that your other friends and I do what we can for Albania. It is your business here to lay the foundations of the Albanian State. Your enemies have said that your feuds were too many and your quarrels too ancient to be overcome. Prove that your enemies are wrong. We hope to see a strong and united Albania.

"Thank you for the kind things which you have said. I will repeat them to the Albanian Committee and your friends in England. We will continue to do what we can. I have received many kindnesses from rich and poor, from Christian and from Moslem in Albania, and I have come here, not sent by my country, but in order to see with my own eyes how the case stands, in order to strengthen my arguments by evidence."

At the end of the speech there was loud and continuous cheering : rifles were grounded with a bang ; every man who had any kind of firearm then let it off ; the smoke was blinding and choking ; the leaves from the plane-tree fell as if an autumn gale was blowing and a piece of flying bark or a ricochetting bullet cut my cheek ; the sun blazed overhead, and the rocky



earth scorched. My servant Deli leaped to his feet and poured out a flood of rhetoric, and I jumped up to stop it. As I did so, my friend the *voivoda*, with the granite face, let off his gun while he was sitting on the ground, and nearly shot me. Then A—— dashed up, letting off his revolver in vague directions, calling upon God and me to witness that he would fight against Montenegro. He was intent upon putting himself right with the others. Passionate speeches followed on the steep mountain, and the congregation in its eagerness forgot the savage heat and made no attempt to get under the shadow of the church wall. "The bones of our ancestors are the line of our frontier," they shouted again and again. "Do we love our land less because it is poor? We will hold our land. Does Europe know what the Montenegrins are? Sons of farthings. Hurrah for Miss Durham! Hurrah for St. John! Long live Albania! Long live Miss Durham! Long live Herbert!" Bang, bang, bang! Old men stood up and pointed to their white hairs and their scars; the mountain rang with their voices; volleys were echoed by gunfire down the valleys, till the priests cried, "Enough, enough!"

We went into the house and my ears were deaf with the noise and my throat dry with the powder that had been fired. We had a bite and a draught of cold water, and then set out down the mountain side and across the valley for the camp of Ded Gion Luli, in a heat that made one wet from head to foot. I left Deli. My guide had the usual heroic tale of mountain duels and told a story of an Albanian who, at a place we had passed, had, single-handed, killed sixteen out of twenty enemies of his people.

After a stiff climb we came to the place where the house of Ded Gion Luli had once stood; it, like all the others, had been burnt. A little way off there was a wall and beyond a fringe of trees. My guide gave a

long, ululating mountain call, then fired his revolver ; and we went a steep way across wild lavender and thyme to his home.

An old man sat upon a carpet under roughly trellised branches, while another ragged carpet was hung as shelter against the westering sun. He was a figure worth remembering in the twentieth century : an old and autocratic chieftain, worshipped by his democratic followers, who is prepared to make the last stand for some untented sky and rocks, rocks bare but for sweet-smelling plants, and to lead his tribe against a united nation. Some picturesque giants were playing with his grand-daughter, aged three, the child of a son he had lost last year in the war.

A feast was soon spread ; Ded Gion was ready enough to talk of the past and its fights. He did not care much to talk of the future. I think he was afraid of being offered pacific advice, for his mind was made up ; he did not mean to change. He waved his hand towards the opposite mountains. " That is where I fought thirty-five years ago," he said, " and this," pointing to the trellised branches and the hanging carpet, " this is the palace that I am going to fight for now. Did you hear any note of indecision at Rapsa ? The Great are too full of their own greatness to think of the little, but we care as much as other people for our homes—even when they are burnt. I am the head of the Five Tribes ; what I am saying to you, they feel."

I finished my meal and said good-bye, admiring the old fellow with all my heart. My Mahomedan friend had arrived, and I left him discussing theology and the Trinity with Ded Gion Luli. I rode on with a guide up the mountain, whose rocks gave out a heat that stung like a lash, until we had crossed the crest, and riding through low scrub we saw across the valley the parish church of Treboina, the mountain of Gruda

and the Montenegrin frontier, with the houses of Podgoritza scattered like white sheep in the vale. I remembered my time there six years before and the murder of the Montenegrin *bairakdar*.

The strategical objections to surrendering Gruda were obvious. A flanking movement from the left would let the Montenegrins into Albania, but Gruda and Detchich barred the way. From the point of vantage where I stood I could not see Tusi: its position was obviously strong, and the defile between Detchich and Gruda hard to force. Half of Gruda might go and not imperil the position. This is a possible ground for compromise—if financial help was given too.

I gave up going to Tusi, as if there had been a row it would have made more difficulties for Burney.

*Monday, September 1, 1913, Scutari.*—I got up very early this morning, said good-bye to the kind priest, Don Sebastian, and galloped to Scutari as fast as I could go, leaving Deli behind me. Excellent horse: it raced down the steep places and over rocks, as proud of himself as a mountaineer. The news here was better on the whole, but I went down with fever. Faik came to see me. He is a witty man and for a short time he charmed the fever from me.

*Tuesday, September 2, 1913.*—I could not sleep and had a temperature, but went out to dine with George Phillips and Peter Granet. The soldier and the sailor both knew how the place ought to be run. They should have autocratic power. Phillips said, with a commanding gesture, "Give me *carte blanche* and I . . ." Granet interrupted, "Give me twenty-four hours and I . . ." I interrupted, "Give me twenty minutes in the House of Commons to explain what I could do . . .": then they both attacked me and the House of Commons, till I reminded them that I was an invalid. A very good dinner.

*Wednesday, September 3, 1913.*—Fever. The Admiral has been to Postripa and could have settled the blood-feud satisfactorily, if it had not been for the Austrians. Mirash Lutzi came in this morning. The priests, said he, had declared that England was pro-Montenegrin. There was one, "Gladstone," who had made speeches about Montenegro in the past. When I had said that it was a damned shame to give Hoti and Gruda to the Black Mountain, it produced an excellent effect. "The Herbert ought to be sent into all the mountains to make these speeches," said he.

*Thursday, September 4, 1913.*—I went to see the Admiral and took part in one of their Conferences. The Austrian Admiral was not there. His excessive demands made them angry: *Cet amiral veut beaucoup de choses*, said they. Then an Albanian deputation came to see me. They said that the trouble was in Scutari; outside the city the feeling was good.

They told me of the priest of Shkreli who, with his flock of Christians, had helped the Moslems to build a mosque. They said that Scutari, not Valona or Tirana, should be the capital, for, said one, "Scutari has always been the centre of intrigue." "Wretch," answered another, "would you perpetuate the shame of the past? Blood builds nations. Intrigue wins small victories and destroys the victors in the end. I speak as a Scutarene."

"What is the good of being free, if Scutari is not the capital?" said another.

The Christians and the Moslems are agreed on this. They were not too pleased with the new régime, and did not like the system of fines, for under this system, they say, the rich can always sin without troubling, but sinning would be pain to the poor. I felt that this objection was very reasonable, but difficult to put into practice.

In the afternoon I went to see Prenk Bib Doda. His niece had arranged an impromptu marriage for him, which took place this afternoon. He was sitting by his bride, looking rather dazed. His niece had been to see the Archbishop the night before and had arranged the whole matter. "*Parce que ça trainait et ça tardait,*" she said to me : a determined girl !

*Friday, September 5, 1913.*—The Albanians asked me to go and speak at a patriotic meeting. I wrote to the Admiral, who objected strongly and, I expect, quite rightly. In the afternoon, the Albanians gave Miss Durham, MacRury and myself an immense tea as a farewell. We all made speeches.

*Saturday, September 6, 1913.*—MacRury and I left, and arrived at night at St. Jean di Medua, where we landed. Never have I seen a more horrible place. In the harbour were some sunken boats ; on shore, the houses were tumbling down, miserable, decrepit, stinking. People crawled out of them like diseased animals ; mosquitoes and flies hung in festoons from the roof of the place that pretended to be a café ; along the road were thick slimy pools, which farther on became marshes—still, but for the movement of insects and water-beetles swimming about among tall bulbous plants, white, green and yellow. The very flowers looked as if they had their roots in corpses. Along the road were straggling trees, which the troops had tried to burn, but apparently they had not had vitality enough to catch fire. It was a place where a duck might have caught typhoid, a leech have developed malaria. I left MacRury on shore, for I did not want to get fever again ; he soon joined me aboard swollen with mosquito stings.

## VALONA AND THE SOUTH

*SUNDAY, September 7, 1913.*—We arrived at Valona soon after dawn, and were met by Mehmed Bey Konitza. I was delighted to see him. He made a number of epigrams—very creditable at that hour, when we were rubbing the sleep out of our eyes. Deli said despondently that the sea was a sorrowful place for a mountaineer at night, when his soul yearned for his own highlands.

We went ashore, rowing over a sea of burning glass, and found the citizens gathered to meet us. The notables of Valona came forward, and offered me the formal thanks of the Albanian population, which I was to convey to the Albanian Committee, for its work. We listened to speeches, and made them on empty stomachs. The sons and nephews of Isa Boletin were there, with messages to me from their father. Amongst them was the boy who had shot Niasi, the comrade of Enver. I did not talk to him.

At that early hour Ismail Kemal Bey was watching over the destinies of his country. He took me to the empty house of Maurice Bernard, a French salt-miner, which the Government had kindly put at my disposal. There we sat and mopped our brows, while I was given breakfast. It was a very full day, in fearful heat.

We went to the Konak, the seat of government, where Ismail Kemal presided. "There are many people who want to see you," he said. "We can talk later." Then the deputations began to arrive, with lists of atrocities committed by the Serbs in the north and by the Greeks in the south. Hassan Bey Prishtina was the first, and after him came a crowd of citizens from Argyrocastro. Outside, in the blazing sunlight,

a large crowd stood and applauded continually; inside, a series of depressing conversations went on. Meymed Bey, Minister for War, arrived. He spoke of the urgent need of help for the refugees, and with bitterness of the way in which the country was being treated. He said he would not speak of his own losses, which were irrelevant, but his property, representing a very large sum, had been taken at Kalkandilen. He told stories of indiscriminate massacre by the Serbs in unarmed Albania. The Serbs had invited him to return and to govern Djakova and Prisrend, but he had refused their offer, preferring his loss. The cheers went on and I felt sick—knowing that nothing could or would be done.

H—— came, whom I had known before, with details of all that the Serbians had done at Mitrovitza. His complaint was that a neutral ought to be allowed to supply metal to either or both belligerents. He went on to talk of Ismail Kemal, saying that the Government was very shaky; the Albanian people were between the devil and the deep sea. Ismail Kemal was believed to have given very valuable concessions to Austria and to Italy and to have sold monopolies, but if he fell, it meant the triumph of Essad, and that would be the ruin of the country. Then a messenger came, asking me to go to the President; I went immediately. I felt that everything depended on Ismail Kemal. But he was old and slow and counted time his friend when it was really his enemy. He was safe as far as Valona and the South were concerned, but if he did not do something to win the confidence of the North, Essad would have his way; and that would mean first a partitioned Albania, then soon, or possibly a little later at Essad's death, a European war.

He asked me for news of the North, what I thought of things, and what was the attitude of the English Government to Albania. I answered that he had read

the speeches of Sir Edward Grey, who said in public what he thought in private: he had been openly favourable to Albania. With regard to the North, I thought that things were very critical: much land had been laid waste, and there was no money for the sowing of corn. It was very important to the country that it should retain his services as President, but there was a danger of his falling unless his Government was able to help actively. He could surely raise some thousands from the customs at Valona and Durazzo? That would do good both materially and politically. It would make a great difference in the North.

He agreed to this, and asked me to write to Sir Edward Grey and Admiral Burney to tell them what he was doing. He said that he was about to send Ministers to the North, in order to study the local questions there. I suggested that as time was pressing they should have full powers to act. He said yes to this—more, I think, because he did not want to be worried by a discussion than because he agreed. He was not inclined to delegate powers, and he was not willing to trust subordinates.

He talked of the Press of Europe, and said how unfair it was to Albania. Other Balkan countries had got their Royal Families, their Diplomats and their paid Press. Albania had none of these things, and was alone in a ring of enemies. I said I would do what I could to help in England, but the Liberals thought that the Albanians were all Turks and Moslems, and the Conservatives thought that they were disturbers of the peace, like the Irish. He spoke cautiously of banks and concessions.

I said I realised how urgently money was required, but I did not see how a Provisional Government could tie a country down to any permanent arrangement, unless their advantage was unquestionable. He spoke of the Greeks and their greed, and yet how easy an



understanding ought to be between Greece and Albania. "The Greeks and the Albanians have the same enemies, the Slavs," said he, "and if they have no common ancestry, they are at least neighbours who have both won freedom. But the Greeks are talkers and vain. The fluent oratory of Pericles destroys the statesmanship of Venizelos."

After luncheon all the shops were shut, and a festive crowd, which was half composed of refugees who had little cause for rejoicing, went upon its way, still demonstrating through the town, first before the Italian Consul, Signor de Faciendi, and then before my house, hailing me, quite wrongly, as the representative of England :

"O, paladin of Liberty, who shall be blessed of our grandchildren," began the spokesman. Speeches, at first reluctant, were dragged from me in Italian—one can't help going on and on in Italian, any more than you can come out of the Mediterranean when you are bathing in summer.

Later in the afternoon, while I was making notes of a report of another deputation, Feyhim Leskoviki, a tall, handsome man, the Governor of Valona, was announced. I stood up and shook hands. He said, "Thank God, that we are both alive." I said, "By all means on this fine day, but why particularly should we do so together?" "Do you remember Sienitza?" he asked, "and the murder of Ilia Popovitch?" Then I recognised him. It was he who had been *Mutesarri* (Prefect) at Sienitza when Ilia Popovitch had been killed, and when we had both been made prisoners. We had coffee and a friendly talk.

I asked for information of the fate of four brothers who had ridden with me. He told me that three of the big brothers who had escorted me had been killed. He thought that very few of the Albanian population there could be left. They were dead or had gone

leaving their possessions. He asked me what was my pleasure, and I inquired if I might visit the prison. He consented, and we went there together through blinding sunshine.

The prison was in a gruesome condition; Feyhim Bey was startled. The room in which the men were herded was very small and had very little ventilation, while the temperature was over 100 outside. The smell was sickening, and the faces of the men were the pale colour of a subterranean fungus; their voices were horrible. The gaoler said to the Albanian A.D.C., "Beware lest they seize your sword, for these are desperate men."

I returned in a rage to Ismail Kemal, and said that the prisons of Morocco were sanatoriums compared with the gaol at Valona. He promised that he would immediately reprieve those men who were not accused of serious crimes, and would have the quarters of the other prisoners changed that day. And this was immediately done.

After the last deputation had left I was told a queer story. The Turkish Commander-in-Chief, Djavid Pasha, whom I had met at Mitrovitza, had occupied a house of a friend of mine in southern Albania with his Staff. The tide of war was running fiercely against the Turks, and the General decided to consult the spirits. The family carpenter was ordered to make a three-legged wooden table, without any nails in it—for the spirits hate metal, said Djavid Pasha. The young Turks invoked the spirit of Nazim Pasha, late Commander-in-Chief, who had been shot by Enver and his friends, to bring them knowledge from the grave. When no answer came, the absent ghost of Nazim was cursed for refusing to give counsel to those who had slain him.

I dined with Ismail Kemal Bey, who talked a great deal of Gordon, whose companion he had once been

upon the Danube Commission. He had, he declared, been invited to go with him to the Sudan. He said that Gordon was a simple humble brave man whom he had loved and admired, but that he had quaint fads. He could not bear gossiping amongst his household, and accordingly selected his servants from different races, who did not know each other's tongues. This had the advantage of putting an end to all gossip, but, said Ismail Kemal, it was laborious to make the Hungarian cook, who only talked Magyar, understand that Gordon hated onions. There must have been other difficulties, too, in this unusual staff. It seemed to me curious that such a Biblical student as Gordon should apparently have forgotten the lesson of the Tower of Babel.

After dinner there came another deputation with a list of massacres by Greeks at Argyrocastro, Grabosh, Permeti, Kolonia and many other places, and accounts of imprisonment at Koritza and Florina. The Greeks, said they, desired about one-third of Albania, the third which represents economically two-thirds of the country. How could you get on, one man from America asked me, without Yorkshire or Lancashire? They forced Albanians to paint their houses in the Greek colours; children were fined for talking Albanian; Greeks were brought to Koritza and Argyrocastro to pose as Albanians and deceive the Boundary Commission.

Before going home to bed I saw Ismail Kemal again. A political crisis had occurred. Essad Pasha, Minister of the Interior, had sent an uncompromising telegram to the President of the Albanian State. He complained that the seat of government had not been moved to Durazzo, that no General Assembly had been called, and that there had been no reconstitution of the Ministry. In other words, this meant that Essad Pasha had refused to submit, that the seat of Government must be transferred to Durazzo, where he, the Tyrant of

Tirana, had it in his power to dictate his will. Ismail Kemal was very anxious. He said that there was much money at Durazzo, which Essad was capable of taking ; he said this without fear of contradiction. I suggested that if he gave me a written promise to spend this money upon the miserable refugees, Essad would find some difficulty in appropriating it. He thought that this was *une idée lumineuse*, but he was unable to find pen or paper to translate it into action. He said that Essad Pasha was very anxious for money to bargain with. Essad was a selfish man, playing his own game ; he had invited the President to join him and to share the spoil. " But," said Ismail Kemal Bey, " I am an old man. I only want to see my country find its legs—and then I will resign. I am tired. I am very tired." In Albania, he continued, the difficulties were great. There were officials who had lost their jobs, there were widows and orphans, there were refugees ; there was no help obtainable from outside and no money in the land.

We left behind us in Valona a complicated political situation : political parties were still fluid in the country, and while there were many who had power and influence, there was no leader who commanded complete obedience. The chief accusation against Ismail Kemal was that he had granted concessions. Concessions were inevitable, and indeed most desirable, but, contended his critics, they should not be granted by a Provisional Government.

I went to say good-bye to the President the next day. He was embarrassing in his kindness. He wanted me to stay, and promised every kind of sport and political interest. He was not sure how far Mohamed Koritza and Philippe Nogga were his supporters, and he did not like the idea of a precious Member of Parliament going off in their company to the country of his enemy, Essad. M.P.s were frail and

capable of doing harm ; one letter to *The Times* could seriously hurt him and his Government. He let us go reluctantly. But, having arrived at his decision, he made charming conversation to me about my father and my uncle, Auberon Herbert. " Lord Carnarvon tried to settle Ireland. It would have been better for England if he had had his way. Your uncle, Auberon Herbert, was different. A fine man. *Il marchait trop vite.*"

We were a very jolly company of thirteen, and the fact that we were contrasted with each other added salt to the amusement of our journey: a priest-poet rode with us, and a patriot who said he had no politics but the good of his country, also Philippe Nogga, linguist and musician, fiddling upon an invisible violin as he rode—and sometimes falling off ; a homicide, who shall be nameless ; a fine singer, who sang the songs of the poet ; Mehmed Bey, the diplomatist, who amused each of his companions in turn at the expense of the rest ; a Rumanian-Albanian, with a Tammany gift for organisation; and lastly a shepherd-king.

I was told of one experience of this shepherd-king such as is unusual in the lives of employers—his workmen had once struck for lower wages. This is the story. He was a mathematician, and by abstruse calculations he had come to the conclusion that there was excellent water hidden in the depths of an unpromising mountain ; water he badly required to cultivate land that was otherwise barren. So the mountain was tunnelled to a considerable depth, and a number of men were employed without result, until it became obvious that the shepherd-king would be ruined if operations were much longer continued. It was then that the workmen, for love of him, struck for lower wages, which he gave them. His labour in the end was crowned with success, water gushed

from the mountain; the prolific earth bore corn, and all shared in his happiness and prosperity.

He also told me himself that he had invented a machine for perpetual motion, and that he was coming to London in three months to patent it. We sat upon rocks that gave a marvellous view. I said, "That is a strange thing to say to a man on these great mountains, O thou of the high brow!" "I will eat my coat," said the shepherd-king, "if it's not true; and the machine is made of wood."

For once, what each member of the company did to please himself resulted in the pleasure of all: the Rumanian-Albanian showed photographs of Prince William of Wied, as we rested in the green dusk of an oak forest; the poet recited his verses; the homicide was discreetly silent; Mehmed Bey discussed with scepticism the possibility of improving the world; the ex-governor of Libya, a very able man, made a speech that was half a poem; and the whole party of Albanians sat down to eat upon the high passes of the scorched mountains, and looked upon the blade-bones of sheep, predicting the near advent of bloodshed and unending war. The stinging scents of the scorched pines, thyme and wild lavender made an airy sauce for our food, and the violence of our political differences for our good-fellowship.

Beyond the green Voiusa, we found Omer Pasha waiting near Fieri, where a petition was presented to me and a speech was made, in eloquent English, by a professor. We were entertained with exuberant Albanian hospitality, which leaves the recipient torpid as a boa-constrictor, especially in the noonday of misty summer heat. Politics were discussed, and the Albanians who discussed them might have been English country gentlemen. On the following morning Feizi Bey arrived. He had been appointed Governor of Berat, in place of Mehdi Bey Frasheri. This meant a

political declaration of war on the part of Ismail Kemal, since he was nominating Governors over the head of Essad Pasha, Minister of the Interior.

We rode in Feizi Bey's company through beautiful foot-hills, and at one place found a cross, and under it a money-box, in which pious wayfarers could drop their contributions. It spoke well for the honesty of men of mixed creeds that this poor shrine was a sufficient protection for charity.

At the bridge of the Voiusa we met the Governor of Berat, Mehdi Bey Frasheri, who did not know that he was dispossessed. Mehmed Koritza broke the unwelcomed news to him, which he received with dignity; he complained that such actions must produce an *effet bien pénible* upon foreigners.

On the outskirts of Berat, Islam Bey, a handsome and an aristocratic old Moslem, met us, while the townspeople crowded behind him with banners, and everyone made speeches to the accompaniment of loud shouts of "Roft Inghilterra!"<sup>1</sup>

We marched on, with banners flying, until we became thousands strong. I was taken to the house of Aziz Pasha Vrioni. "God help you foreigners," said my host; "you are rare as diamonds and you have to speak. It is hard on you, but life is hard on all." I proceeded to wash from head to foot. As I was becoming clean there were loud shouts of *le peuple vous veut*. I was urged to huddle on my clothes, and I then made several breathless speeches from a balcony, to the gorgeous crowd below. Afterwards, visitors flowed in. The Mufti, like a jolly monk, who had been out fighting for three months with little luck, he said, now arrived. "If only the Commissioners, in their inquiries, would make the old

<sup>1</sup> I met Islam Bey again in the War. His fine house had been burnt and his goods taken from him. His courtesy and hospitality remained.

people talk, they would get at the truth," said he, "for the old people know only Albanian." I told him that it was impossible to get a better man than Doughty Wylie. "Ah, yes, but what about the others?" said he.

Then came the Greek Metropolitan, with a crowd behind him; he spoke of the Orthodox Church and its privileges. I said I hoped that the Orthodox Church would be allowed all privileges in Albania accorded to the Albanians in Greece. "Ah," said he, "the Albanians and the Greeks are the children of one father, but the Greeks are diplomats and scientists, doctors and philosophers, while the Albanians are only shepherds and rural beings." I replied that a hundred years ago the Greeks were also a pastoral people without a reputation for science. Was Kolo-kotrones a scientist, or Odysseus of Ithaca notorious for his humanity? Greece had been greatly helped; she surely should help, too, her poor brothers. The Metropolitan replied that he would put my words into a sermon.

Berat is a pretty town of white houses and bridges in a valley, resting upon both sides of the river, which flows through the mountains. All night long the songs of nightingales came up the valley with the sound of running water.

Next day, on our road, we were suddenly told that the Serbians were just ahead of us. We called a hasty council and decided to go on, and send the gendarmes back if we met with the Slavs. It seemed probable that the Serbians were advancing as the Allies of Essad Pasha. One of the party looked very solemn: "This may do the country harm. For the Serbians may well kill the Member of Parliament in order to impute the crimes to Albanians and hurt the country abroad; they would also destroy us as witnesses." All that day, we rode through plains until



we came to the longest bridge in Albania, that leads through the marshes to Elbasan. Elbasan came out to meet us.

We spoke in loud but kind voices to the shadowy crowd that met us as night fell, and lightning played over the mountains that made an amphitheatre about the plain. I stayed with Aqif Pasha in his great house. That night at dinner a telegram arrived from Ismail Kemal, requesting the Governor of Elbasan to arrest my companions, Mehmed Bey and Philippe Nogga, who were absent at the moment. He read this to me. I said, "It puts me in a difficult position. I can't leave my friends: you wouldn't." "God bless me, no!" said the Governor. "Of course, you want companions; you shall all go off together to-morrow, inshallah."

At Elbasan I had the luxury of being shaved, and was surprised by the barber offering me cosmetics. In the morning an infant wonder made a speech, while his elders stood round him admiringly. I found Aqif Pasha a courteous host and full of information. Politics were very confused. It was rumoured that Essad Pasha had accepted vast sums from the Serbs and that he was rapidly creating an aristocratic party of Beys. On the other hand, many of the Beys believed that the time of democracy was coming into its own and that Albania would become up-to-date by destroying politically their own land-holding class.

The next day we rode from Elbasan to Tirana with few incidents on the road. Fond as I am of Albania and the Albanians, I have always tried to be truthful about the country and the people, and I warn all travellers of one serious objection to summer rides through those forests. There is a peculiarly horrible bluebottle that attempts to make the human ear its habitation; my own ear attracted them in numbers, and my horse's ears; a fly and I nearly perished

together at a deep and rapid ford of the River Devoli.

It was an enchanting ride along the cobble-stones of the Via Ignatia, through oak-scrub that suggested wolves, and was reminiscent of romantic outlaws at every turn, and through forests where tingling spices were carried on the warm wind. Overhead flew eagles.

These verses formed themselves in my mind as I rode :

A road smites through the mountains, like the thrusting of a sword,  
It glitters through green forests, and shines above the ford,  
And where the ages ruin, the tombstone of a Lord  
Is broken into pieces to make it strong and board.

The road was made by Romans, strong stone by stone they laid,  
The fountains gave them music, the beech trees gave them shade.  
They laughed among the mountains at the noise the thunder made,  
And built the way eternal, for eternal Roman Trade.

Great Philip, King of Macedon, passed up this warriors' way,  
With forty men before him and five thousand men behind ;  
His conquests all are scattered like mists at dawning day ;  
The Romans wrote their journey in the stones with which they signed.

—and many more verses of the same kind.

We were met some way from Tirana by Fadil Pasha, Dervish Bey Elbasan and Dervish Hima. There were polite speeches. Fadil Pasha seemed a pleasant man, with a kindly soul ; Dervish Bey a mediæval gallant and troubadour ; and Dervish Hima a huge, full-blooded brute, the pliant tool of Essad, with all the worst faults of deportment and language of the youngest of the Young Turks.

Dervish Hima : “ *Le gouvernement d'Ismail Kemal est maudit.* ”

I : “ *Ayez la bonté d'expliquer, je vous en prie.* ”

Dervish Hima : “ *Il n'a pas fait une nouvelle cité et les Serbes nous ont pris Djakova. Il n'a pas fait une route. Il n'a pas donné abondamment à manger à douze mille réfugiés. Il faut avoir un nouveau gouvernement.* ”

I asked if cities were any use without men, or roads without commerce, adding, "Had you not better do what you can to feed the refugees, and concentrate on minor but necessary improvements, instead of political quarrels?"

Conversation languished.

When we arrived at Tirana; a friendly town, green with cypresses and big gardens, watered by streams; a town with orderly, red-roofed houses, where nested comfortable storks, the Pilgrim Fathers of the Turks. It was lovely with its grey walls, its cypresses and the sound of running water and of cooing doves. In Tirana I found the old-fashioned school of Moslems were in opposition to the young Albanians from America with a twang in their voices. A naked man, *Bibi*, who, in the cause of holiness, wore no clothes, winter or summer, walked up the main street, conversing pleasantly with those he met.

I stayed at the house of Abdy Bey Toptani, a courteous shy man, who reminded me of Lord Lansdowne. Essad Pasha came in to luncheon. We talked Turkish at first, but an Albanian appeared who talked French, and interpreted between us.

Essad Pasha was not a big man, though stout. In those days he had eyes like a wild boar, which may have been a symptom of the incipience of the illness from which he subsequently suffered. He was not an unattractive man. But perhaps it is more accurate to say there was just something likeable about him. He struck me as being timid, but very greedy of power. All his conversation made it clear that he, unlike his countrymen, was not tired of being a mediævalist. His spiritual home was in the time of Ali Pasha of Janina. After a long conversation we went to lunch with Fadil Pasha, whose younger brother waited upon us in the old Albanian style.

Essad talked much about Scutari. Nearly all he

said was interesting, and nearly all was said with an object. He knew I had come from Ismail Kemal, his rival, and that I had stayed with Aqif Pasha, his possible friend; and he kept away from politics only to return to the subject. We talked of the Balkan war. He said he was out shooting when the Montenegrins first attacked, and that he ran into them quite casually while he was after partridges. He escaped by the skin of his teeth.

He was not in favour of making roads; the roadlessness of Albania was her safety. But now the people could not get on without transport and communications. Once he had ridden in nine hours from Tirana to Scutari; that showed what could be done.

After luncheon, Essad talked politics solidly: he had given a six days' ultimatum to the Valona Government to the effect that a National Assembly must be held, and he found himself in a difficult position. If he did nothing he lost prestige; if he moved, it was difficult to see where the move would end. Whatever he did, it seemed certain that he was supported by Serbia and probably by Greece.

The propositions he had put forward were:

- (1) The Albanian Government to go to Durazzo.
- (2) The renovation of the Albanian Cabinet.
- (3) No concessions to be granted to Foreign Powers by the Provisional Government.
- (4) The concessions already granted to be annulled.
- (5) Convocation of a National Assembly.

He began by asking me my opinion. After modest phrases, I said, if he fought the Government and lost, Albania would lose his services. If he kept quiet, nothing was likely to occur, though his previous announcements had made his position difficult. I did not see why a compromise should not be arrived at. To say to the Government, "You must not give con-

cessions and, on the other hand, you must get a loan for the starving refugees," would be to earn thanks, and not curses ; for all his countrymen must be solidly against irregular concessions, and equally in favour of organised relief of their countrymen.

He said his terms had been given and he could not go back on them. What other plan had I to suggest ? I said he left nothing to suggest : his plan was, " Take my terms or I will force them on you."

*Essad* : " Ismail Kemal is a thief and a wanderer. All that I desire is to save Albania and retire."

*I* : " Ismail Kemal has the same opinion of your Excellency as you have of him. Your country will be safe if you two don't divide it with your quarrels."

*Essad* : " The difference between myself and Ismail Kemal is that I am sincere and he is not. I can tell you what he has done."

*I* : " A foreigner cannot go into all these questions. Europe knows Ismail Kemal better than it knows Your Excellency, and it prefers a man whom it knows, with faults, to a man whom it does not know, who may also have faults."

*Essad* : " I went to Vienna a few months ago and they promised me a Prince in ten days. Then I went to Rome expecting the promise to be ratified, and it was not. I suspected Ismail Kemal of saying to the Italians that it was better not to appoint a Prince until the present difficulties had been cleared from his path. I think Ismail Kemal wants to obtain the situation of being virtual Prince of Albania, and that he is going to make a law to that effect."

*I* : " Unless the Commission agrees to it, such a law would have no effect."

*Essad* : " The Commission and its discussions may drag on for any time and, in the end, it would accept *un fait accompli*. You don't know how much harm

the rumour has done me that I wanted to be Prince of Albania."

*I* : " If I were Your Excellency, I should not trouble about that, for there have been worse things said of you."

*Interpreter* : " *Faut-il le dire, si brutalement ?* "

*I* : " Yes. The present state of unrest, after your country has been invaded and when it has no certain hand to guide it, is dangerous. The plans of Your Excellency seem to me to increase this unrest and to play the game of Greece and Serbia, who wish to show you to Europe as an uncivilised and disunited people."

*Essad* : " I mean to call the best men. I will call a General Assembly."

*I* : " Then you will get your mandate from the whole country ? "

*Essad* (reluctantly) : " The Albanians of the South count less than the people of these provinces, but I will do so if the Government meets at Durazzo."

*I* : " If it meets at Durazzo, foreign opinion will say it is because you, Essad Pasha, dominate Durazzo."

*Essad* : " If that is so, it can be elsewhere. I don't want to quarrel with Ismail Kemal. The fault is his. I count greatly on English sympathy."

*I* : " And Albania will get it if you yourself do not create trouble."

I said good-bye to Essad Pasha with feelings of dislike, but interested in this survival from the Middle Ages, whose public view was limited to the horizon of the highest mountain peak from which he or a retainer had shot a private enemy. He was an intelligent antediluvian of the East, who hated the decease of the old Turkish régime, one which, for such as he, meant privileged outlawry and a monopoly of pardon. I drove back with Abdy Bey, who avoided politics and abstained from all references to his kinsman, Essad.

I met the Italian Consul, who was pro-Essad, as a

banker is pro-inflation ; and the Austrian Consul, a very clever boy, Theodore de Hornbostel, who hated Essad. He talked Turkish, French, Albanian, German, Hungarian and perfect English ; he was fond of the people and sincere in his wish to help me. I went with Dervish Hima to see the refugees—a wretched crowd who took all pleasure from the beautiful day.

Next morning, we left for Durazzo in four carriages. Philippe Nogga and I were in the first, when a few dozen shots about three hundred yards away startled us. Dusk was falling : I said, “ We must try to stop this trouble.” The inventor of the machine for perpetual motion cried : “ Move not. Abide in thy seat. Fools are killing fools.” My Albanian servant, Deli, and I raced through the high grass and the poisonous smell of marshes. The shooting stopped and so did we, and returned to our carriage to drive through moonlight and marsh exhalations to Durazzo, talking highbrow ethics as to whether it was better for clean men to keep out of politics and leave politics to the rascals, or to take an active part and be defiled by the pitch. We all assumed that we were the salt of the earth.

At Durazzo we met Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy back from Lower Dibra, where the Serbs had burnt seventeen villages and the people were now starving. They had had a Conference in Ahmed Bey Zogu’s house, chief of the Mati, a boy of eighteen. He was said to read Shakespeare and to be a fine fighting man. Kennedy said they wanted to evacuate a wounded man. “ No,” said Ahmed Mati, “ I cannot spare the men. He has got to recover or die.” Our party began to break up. The inventor of perpetual motion left us. His recent role in life had been to pick me apples from nowhere, and prophesy from the bones of sheep. Another lord from the south went. He could put five thousand men into the war, but said he proposed

to bring only a few to the north, as a symbol of Albanian unity. The poet had stayed at Tirana.

A man, whom I will call Rejeb Effendi, a Moslem who came into my life again during the war, was a faithful companion. He desired to come and train in England as a policeman or a soldier. He was a handsome wiry man whose home was in Himara ; he had a Christian blood-brother. I thought there was perpetual rebellion in his blood and did not encourage his coming to England, and my later acquaintance with him in the war went some way to prove that I had been right.

On Thursday, September 18, 1913, I returned to Scutari, cursed with a bad bout of fever. I went to see Admiral Burney, who told me that Montenegrins had been killed upon the frontier of Hoti and Gruda, near Rapsha, and that all the Austrian newspapers said that the responsibility for this lay upon me and the speeches I had made upon the frontier, earlier in that summer.

There were big things going on at home of which we had little knowledge. The Albanian question itself was important enough to provoke a war ; Italy could not afford to allow Austria to take Valona or Durazzo ; the Admirals had had a meeting, but the Austrian Admiral had not come to it, and had offered no explanation. No one was sure if relations were broken off or not.

*Extracts from Diary.*—Admiral Burney is a fine man, but he does not take advice, or at least not disinterested advice, and has made, it is said, a man who was waiter in an Egyptian hotel Governor of Bushati. Ded Gion Luli and his people came in, and I got up from my bed to see them. Five hundred people, they say, have been massacred by the Serbs in the last fortnight.



For four days I have had bad fever and a stream of visitors—of whom Faik Bey Konitza was the most amusing for a sick man. Reports are very depressing and horrible. Women came in from Djakova last night. I did not see them, but heard from Domenico what they had said. The Serbs, said he, had sometimes killed a woman in child to decide bets on the baby's sex. The women had seen this happen. Miss Durham had other stories, as bad, of the cruelty of the invaders.

Muhajjirs at Tirana had the same incredible things to say. These are peasants who do not invent, and they tell these things so vividly that it is impossible not to believe them. In Scutari, they say, the men lie sometimes, but the women never. If these things are true, it is a very usury of vengeance on the part of the Serbs for every death at Kossovo four hundred years ago. One woman came to see me who talked Italian. "We are hens," she said, "under the protection of Europe, and this is what happens to us: *Basta che siano Albanesi!* (What are they but Albanians!), it is said—and nothing can be done with the Serbs." I wish myself that Austria would give her protection in the future to the Catholics of Serbia, rather than to the Catholics of Albania.

I got up to dine with Peter Granet, military Attaché. He told me the story of an old woman at Djakova. She had been called to the window to see her son surrounded by Serbians with bayonets. She gave all the money she had. Summa asked her, "And was the boy's life spared?" "Yes," she said. "*Meno male,*" he answered. That is the point to which this people is reduced. It is enough to be able to thank God to have escaped naked with one's life.

PART V

THE FLOWERY REVOLUTION  
THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION  
THE BALKAN WAR



## PART V

### THE FLOWERY REVOLUTION

**I**N 1908 the Turkish Revolution broke out, like a crash of innocuous thunder. The occasion, if not the cause, came from Albania and Macedonia. A few months before there had been a conference at Reval, between King Edward, the Kaiser and the Tsar. The Turks believed that, unless immediate action was taken, the fate of Macedonia was sealed, and that those vilayets would be irrevocably lost to the Ottoman Empire.

I arrived at Constantinople in the full flush of revolution. The city was glowing like a rose, and tense with excitement. Where before there had been silence, crowds wandered singing. Christians had their arms round the necks of Moslems; the old order and the new mingled. There were high hopes for the future. Murder ceased; there was no thieving; baksheesh was refused; the millennium reigned. Pacifists, idealists—and some others, had flocked from all over Europe to see the vulture turn into the dove of peace. Of foreigners the British were popular beyond comparison.

I remember on one occasion, on Galata Bridge, hearing loud cheers, and on asking the reason, I learnt that a man who was hawking buttons had hit upon a smart commercial idea. "Beautiful buttons," he cried, "English buttons, made in England, the Home of Liberty!" The crowd applauded and bought up his whole stock. The horses of Sir Gerard Lowther were taken out of the shafts of his carriage, and he was dragged up the steep hill to the Embassy by a Turkish mob in a frenzy of enthusiasm.

The hopes were too high, and the colours of that dream too brilliant to last. The political *comitadjie* of the Balkans refrained from murdering for a short time, and for a short time surprise paralysed the Great Powers; then the Balkan murderer returned to his trade—and the Great Powers to theirs. The foundations of the New Order lay in a rainbow future of which mankind dreamed, but never saw. The Old Order had very deep roots, and it had foreign officialdom on its side, which it knew and understood. Human nature may have been favourable to the New Order, but the *Chinovniks*<sup>1</sup> of the world were not.

In the summer of the Revolution Constantinople was like a continuous garden party, exhilarated, yet quivering with agitation. One met the principal actors daily, at luncheon, at dinner, or in their offices. I knew Talaat and Enver the day after my arrival. They were the two most prominent men, and each had his own attraction. Talaat had strength, hardness and an almost brutal *bonhomie*, and a light in his eyes rarely seen in men, but sometimes in animals at dusk. His face was oval and sallow, with a wide forehead and very thick hair; he had heavy eyebrows and a rather hawk nose. He shook hands with a very strong grip. He lacked any kind of pomposity and enjoyed laughter. I liked him and his courage, and, as far as I was myself concerned, I would have trusted him.

Enver was slight, dapper, handsome, with very heavy eyebrows and a curling moustache; dark as a southern Italian. He was ambitious for his country, but modest and vain. He was shy and simple in all he said and did, but he could not pass a looking-glass. To these men, the new life was like coming from the darkness into the dazzling light of day; a blind man,

<sup>1</sup> *Chinovniks*. The Russians' word for official. The clan against whom the Russian Revolution was made, and who have now received a double portion of power under other names.

suddenly cured, with his sight restored has little sense of perspective. I went with Enver to a concert, and was amused at his surprise at hearing women sing. The language, too, was a difficulty, for Turks are like Englishmen, without much linguistic facility. One of the Young Turks was anxious to pay a girl who had been singing a high compliment. He wanted to say, "She sings like a nightingale." What he actually said was, "*Elle chante comme un canard !*"

Niasi, an Albanian, was a great figure, but it seemed to me accidentally so. He had reckless courage and ferocity, but little ability ; he was a lout beside the others.

Karasso, the Jew, was deep in the counsels of the Committee of Union and Progress. He had the eyes of a dreamer and the hand of a financier, perpetually playing with his rosary. Djavid was the best financial brain of the Young Turks. He also was of Jewish descent, a poor *Dunmeh*, who came from Salonika, and, unlike most of his comrades, he still lives and has a part, perhaps a great one, to play. His right-hand man and press agent was Hussein Djahid, a man of quick, shrewd judgment and polished manners. Ahmed Riza Bey was President of the Chamber ; he was a tall, dull man of immovable will, whose lack of perception later injured his country.

I felt the singular attraction of Rahmy Bey. He was good-looking and he was charming in conversation. The Old Turks constantly reproached their successors with being parvenus, and being "*d'une origine tout à fait humble.*" They called Talaat "*chingeni*" (gipsy), which was a libel ; the parents of the prominent revolutionaries were all said to be sweetmeat-sellers. But his enemies could not bring accusations of this kind against Rahmy Bey, who was a country gentleman by birth. He was supposed to be pro-British, but it seemed to me that he was like a young Englishman,

who is leaving the University and going into public life—patriotic, but not dogmatic, and having views rather than politics. His manners were friendly, and yet aloof. It was apparent that he liked a number of us and our company, but I thought that he was continually weighing the advantages and the disadvantages of friendship with Great Britain, and that, though he was a European Turk, he was more inclined than the others to favour the cry of "Asia for the Asiatic!" He was a strong supporter of the Committee of Union and Progress. Later, he became Vali of Smyrna.

During the war he was, I believe, opposed to deporting the littoral Greeks of Asia Minor, partly on humanitarian grounds and partly because he thought that this policy was calculated to bring King Constantine into the war against Turkey; but on this point the Germans overruled him. He was a good friend to the English in Smyrna and protected them effectively; so much so that he was officially thanked through Sir Francis Elliot, the British Minister in Athens. As a reward for his unfailing kindness, he was arrested after the Armistice and imprisoned in Malta, where he remained for three years, separated from his family, without a single charge being made against him. There were many efforts in the House of Commons to discover the reason of this mean ingratitude which accompanied the violation of the Armistice, but the House of Commons of that day was stertorous and servile. It was the period of Mr. Lloyd George's triumph and of his private policy; questions were quite fruitless.

No attempt at a description of the Turkish reformers would be complete without the name of Riza Tewfik Bey, known in Turkey as "philosophe Riza." He was of Albanian descent, a man of kindly and knightly character, gifted with a silver tongue that never rested. He paid little attention to difficulties, seeing

all things in the light of charity, and finding the solution of impossible situations by investing humanity at large with his own toleration.

Such were the chief heralds of the day of wrath that was to dawn upon Europe and upon Asia, in 1914. For the moment they were the masters of events.

I went to the opening of Parliament. I see the picture as if it had happened yesterday ; the intense and pathetic optimism of the crowd in Stamboul, who believed that the eternal question of the masses, " Oh, happiness, thou dewy-petalled flower, thy wayside blossom shall we never see ? " had been at last happily answered. The scene in the House was unprecedented. There sat Faisal from the Hedjaz, his golden *agal* on his head, and his green *djibbah* falling from his shoulders, and with him his comrades, the hawk-faced men of the desert ; while beside them sat the young frock-coated Turk, with the culture of Paris ; while, next to Faisal himself, lounged Enver, in spick-and-span uniform, with careless attitude but prominent sword-hilt. The whole scene, indeed, was the strangest marriage of the ballot-box and the scimitar. I wrote at the time the following account, which was published in the *Spectator*.

The Ottoman Parliament opened to-day (December 17, 1908), and, more favoured than most lovers of Turkey, I was present at the ceremony. It has been my fortune to receive much Turkish hospitality in many parts of the Empire—sometimes in the form of bread and olives on the march, and often a share in the none too ample meal of the soldier—and I have been grateful to my hosts ; but this morning it was not only gratitude that I felt, but a very keen admiration for them in their new rôle.



If ever Constantinople deserved her name—Der-i-sadet, the Gate of Felicity—she has deserved it to-day. From the Golden Horn to the mosques and white houses of Eyub, and beyond the swaying cypresses, the light was radiant and tender. The steamers of the Bosphorus gave up a throng as gay and sparkling as its waters, and though the snow had disappeared, there was a memory of its cleanness in the wind. Crowds surged through the narrow unguarded streets in haste, but without roughness. Men who six months ago would have cut each other's throats, and whose dreams never held the possibility of toleration, were gentle to each other in the crush, with a consideration that is very rarely seen in Europe. Swarthy Kurdish hammals, for once free of their porters' packs, some of whom had certainly clubbed Armenians with a feeling of pious satisfaction, were overflowing with geniality to kinsmen of their former victims. I do not think that amongst the many in Constantinople one puppy was hurt throughout the march. Perhaps the strangest feature of these weeks is that the kindness which has replaced the bitter vindictiveness of the past almost escaped notice.

The fact of freedom is new and staggering; it is, indeed, so absorbing that the smaller benefits which it has brought in its train are lost sight of. Enmity has not been a luxury amongst those peoples, but their daily bread, upon which they have been forced to exist. To them the old régime is finished, and where once sympathy would have been unthinkable, it is now natural.

In the great procession of a few days ago, which heralded the ceremony that has just ended, we from the West were amused to see in the same line of march, divided, it is true, by Circassian cavalry, ballot-boxes wreathed with flowers, perambulators, two dancing children, a Bactrian camel, and a taxicab. This last

was quite outside the experience of the crowd, which, however, saw no incongruity in the relation between the old and the new, but accepted the motor as unquestioningly as the young friendship, for "are not these things of the Constitution?" A Turk quoted to me an Arab saying: *Mazi ine mazi, el hamd ulillah* ("That which is past is past, thank God!").

If the voice of the crowd were articulate, its cry would probably be: "Let the dead bury their dead, for life such as we have never known it is before us." This morning even the Turkish women in their black dresses seemed to have borrowed some of the buoyancy of the atmosphere.

A good-natured crowd with some difficulty divided, until at last my friends and I found ourselves in the Chamber in which the Deputies were to meet. Space does not admit of a description of the Chamber, or of my telling the reasons why it was selected. The room is small, and will only be used temporarily. In the middle, by the wall, stood the seat and table of the unchosen President, and to the right of this, beyond the Deputies' seats, were three tiers of boxes. The central box of the central tier was reserved for the Sultan, the Imperial Princes were on his left, and on the right a General in attendance, while the diplomats faced him across the House.

If the inauguration had been held, as was intended, on Monday instead of on Thursday, the preparations would not have been completed. The Porte, however, luckily discovered that Monday was the anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, and, as a compliment to England, postponed the opening of Parliament. There are obvious reasons why this courtesy should not be made a precedent, since with a wider application it would be almost impossible ever to summon a Parliament. The windows looked out upon the road where the carriages halted, some two hundred yards

from the House, to which the Deputies walked. Two lines of the Salonika Regiment that played the most prominent part in the revolution held back the crowd, though how this was achieved it was not easy to say. It looked as if the tide was being checked by a sieve, for in places the line leaked, and turbulent, brilliant specks from the throng broke through. These pioneers were unmolested by the troops, but on one occasion the rest of the crowd was severely punished for their delinquencies. The representatives of the banks and foreign institutions of the country, with European punctuality, arrived first.

The religious Orders, who took their place in Parliament by courtesy, followed, dressed in green and gold, beautiful and very vivid. The venerable expounder of the Sheriat, bowed with age, was supported by two splendid retainers. Cheers and blessings went up from Christians and Turks as he passed.

The progress of the clergy was disordered by the dogs, who took advantage of the first sunshine for some days to go to sleep in the middle of the road. Slight confusion took place when a number of soldiers moved forward to evict these supporters of the old régime (for such is supposed to be the politics of the dogs), who resented the unusual interference with their comfort, while meantime the people broke through the weakened cordon. As each popular Deputy passed hands were clapped and cheers were raised, and clouds of pigeons rose to seek a resting-place among the minarets, eddying in swirls of white through the sunshine, like snowflakes round the tall pinnacles.

The dome of the mosque facing us was garlanded with the violet and blue-black dresses of Turkish ladies. In the Chamber it seemed as if the strong winter light infused gaiety and hope into the mournful wistfulness of the Constitutional hymn: the people

applauded continuously, and it was only at rare intervals that one could hear the cooing of the doves. Suddenly the Ortoghrul Horse, the White Lancers of Yildiz, dashed into view, galloping down the lane of light, and the crowd melted back through the line of soldiery it had penetrated, as the Sultan's victoria drove up. For a few minutes there was silence, except, I regret to record, for a faint clicking, where privileged foreigners were preparing the cameras that they had smuggled in.

The entire Chamber stood up as Abdul Hamid walked into the central compartment. A red chamberlain salaamed before him, with loop upon loop of deep obeisance and ancient ceremonial. Above the Sovereign on the right a great acetylene lamp threw his dark figure into fierce relief against the scarlet curtain that hid the door. The two men were like the images of a cinematograph, and the whole *mise-en-scène*, the perfect stillness, the gestures of exaggerated humility of the official under the focus of the intense unflinching light, produced a startling impression of unreality.

The Deputies all turned to their Sovereign and he watched his new rivals, who were certainly worthy of observation. It seemed to me that behind the Deputies there were ranged, rank upon rank, the shadowy hordes of their constituents; that the stillness of the House reproduced the hush of Anatolia, where the long-suffering, stolid Turk waits for the news of life or death that will filter through to him by obscure channels. For in no idle, rhetorical sense, but in very truth, the destinies of the nation lie in the hands of the men that it has chosen, nearly all of whom are without experience of responsibility and statecraft. Most of the Members are earnest men, but they are pathetically conscious that they are not, and for some time cannot be, efficiently equipped to fight the difficulties in their way.

Not far from me I saw an acquaintance : he wore a white turban, his beard was dyed scarlet, and I felt that if he rose to speak he would first of all shake the dust of the plains of Koniah from his green robe. From the windows on the right the light fastened on the silver agals of the Arabs, the twisted threads that bind the kerchiefs above their forehead, and showed their desert horsemen's dresses. They number amongst them one Christian : a distinguished scholar, famous for his translation of Homer into Arabic, who owed his election to the votes of Syrian Moslems. And I wondered as I looked what were the real thoughts of the polished gentleman with whom I had talked a few minutes before, who made delightful conversation in perfect French, and whose electors were habitually ambushed in the wildest part of Kurdistan, and had probably met for the first time without bloodshed at the polling-booth.

On the whole, a soldier would be more likely to be impressed by the Turkish Parliament than a politician. The majority look what they are—sons of a fighting race ; and for the mind's eye it is easy to transport them from the debating-chamber to the battlefield—to see them charging for a desperate hope of victory, and to hear, instead of smooth speeches, the shout of " God, God and our Faith ! " They are warriors who believe that peace is the salvation of their people, and have become diplomats with the confidence of children. " God help their simplicity ! " say we who are fond of them. I would gladly have paid for the tickets of a band of " passive resisters " if with the sight they could have absorbed some comprehension of the scene, and the understanding of what these men have at stake, and in what coin they are prepared to pay.

The First Secretary read the Sultan's speech with a finely acted eloquence, which was greeted occa-

sionally by low applause and murmured hopes that only once rose to a cheer. The speech ended, and the Ruler spoke, inaudibly. An old priest then called down a blessing on the Constitution and the House, in the long, high tones of the Muezzins, and still, from outside, the thanks of the people rose in wave upon wave of noise through the sunlit air, drowning the quavering benedictions of the Imam. Once again, except for the whispers of some of the Europeans that would not be stilled, there was silence, and before the fluent speeches on procedure began I got up and went out. For I knew the speeches that I should hear. I have listened to them in the flaming restaurants on the quay of Galata, where Greek orators convince each other of the justice of their cause; and I have sat while Arab Sheikhs harangued into the dusk of the Persian Gulf; and therefore, having known them each in his place, I did not want to-day to hear them in Parliament. And as I went out into the crowd I wondered: Is this the end of the antiquity of the Byzantium whose spirit lingers in Stamboul, and are Der-i-sadet and Constantinople to have one significance for the Greek and the Lahz, for the Turk and the Armenian? If the ghosts of the Porphyrogeniti still haunt that most splendid of all royal roads, the Bosphorus, will they share their astonishment with the spirits of Mahomet the Conqueror and Suleiman the Magnificent?

We should of course be glad that brisk debate is to take the place of the clash of swords, that antagonistic ideals will at last harmonise, and that the Crescent and the Cross can throw their shadows side by side upon a peaceful land. We who hated the old régime, who consider no tribute too great to those who have achieved the miracle of a reformation without a revolution, may still be pardoned if we remember the old picture from which the colours have not entirely

faded—the chivalry of Salah ed din; the ideals, even in their decadence, of the Crusaders, and how “in crimsoned ships with diamonded, dark oars they came” to fight for Christ with Godfrey, or, impelled by less spiritual motives, to struggle under the doubtful banners of Bohemond and Tancred. The County Council is an admirable institution, but we who have never known, or, rather, who have never suffered from, the tyranny of the ancient system bid farewell to the “Thousand-and-One Nights” with a sigh.

Will these men from the country, who have done so much, be able to hold their own against European intrigue and the rapacity of the West? *Inshallah*. God builds the nest of the blind bird, says the Turkish proverb.

In 1908 Fitzmaurice was senior Dragoman at the Embassy. He had a challenging personality, that changed all things with which it came in contact. If he had been an officer on the North-West Frontier, if he had been an Irish political leader, or if he had been a Civil Servant, he could not have failed to leave an indelible impression. It was on British policy in Constantinople that he left his mark. He had the attractiveness peculiar to an Irishman who is reckless and imaginative, and whose crude vitality is combined with a subtlety that is as much a part of himself as his skin.

Fitzmaurice had gone through an agonising time in Asia Minor, and his persistent courage during the Armenian massacres saved many lives. He had endured the killing Arabian heat and had fought Turkish claims on the Aden frontier on behalf of his heterogeneous Empire; and he had succeeded. He was still young, full of power and vigour, and with the knowledge that cannot be bought, when he was promoted to be chief Dragoman of the British Embassy;

translator of the words, but not keeper of the conscience, of his country

Through all his official life Fitzmaurice had dealt with and opposed the Old Turk. He knew his good qualities and his bad qualities. He could often talk the Turk's language as well as the Turk ; he used the same silences and gutturals as deep as the Pashas, some of whom he had grown to respect. He was the ivy that supported the tottering Ottoman oak, for no man who knows a language perfectly can be whole-hearted in his desire for the destruction of the people of that language, and the Turkey of those days was friendly to us, even when she was most blandly obstructive. Now, in the place of the old pashas, with their stately presence, their high honorifics, their venerable beards, he was called upon to meet a miscellany of Jews from Salonika, of Turkish Boulevardiers and moustachioed Syrians from Lausanne, who spoke to him, not in Turkish, but in the French of Pera.

These men, who were now the chiefs of Turkey, had read Jean Jacques Rousseau, admired French novels, and considered an Official Interpreter to the Porte as a humiliation to their country. Othello's occupation was gone : Fitzmaurice's position remained, but its local and official seal had been lost in the Revolution. So complete a change of circumstance must have its influence upon any man. Fitzmaurice calculated for his Empire, but he calculated passionately. He was too exceptional and brilliant a man to be typical ; yet in this case, what was true of him was true of the majority of the permanent British officials in Turkey.

The duty of the ordinary permanent official in Turkey was to watch over British interests and, where it was possible, to help suffering humanity. The British Consuls in Anatolia, Syria and Kurdistan had been trained in a school which taught them to do both these things admirably. Suddenly the times were out of joint.



The edict had gone forth that Turkey was to be a civilised Power, and the prestige of the Consul's anomalous position and his rank of protector of the weak were taken from him, in a land where justice was to be done to all alike.

All his life the Consul had been accustomed to Turkish obstruction and to Turkish courtesy ; Turkey had changed in a day ; the British official, who had once been " Your High Presence " had become " vous," if not " tu," and often the men who thee and thoued him had less knowledge of life than the Turkish official whose methods he had fought in bygone days. The world had turned into what the Levant called " a fantasia " ; the British Consul in Turkey had not been trained to dream dreams or to see visions ; he had had a tough political and commercial proposition with which to grapple, and he had carried out his duties as honourably and steadfastly as his limited powers would permit. Now he had to deal with chaos, and an order that rested upon—not visions—but visionaries, and, naturally, he was often hostile to the new régime.

It is, I think, not unfair to say, with reservations, that the forces ranked against the Young Turks were too formidable to admit the possibility of a rejuvenated Turkey, even if the leaders of the movement had all of them risen to the sustained heights of the ideals which they proclaimed. Europe was against them, for Europe wanted a client and not a competitor. Officialdom was conservative and antagonistic, for the Young Turks were not Conservatives, but experimentalists. Their appeal to Europe was for renunciation ; their appeal to their own people was for sacrifice. The moment that they touched constructive work, they shattered their popularity, which could only live on air ; they offended the Turk by making the Christian his equal ; they destroyed the hope of the Christian by putting him, for good and all, under a reformed

Turkey, by removing him from the protection of the Great Powers, and by sterilising his national and imperial ambitions.

The Embassy had its critics in Constantinople. Fitzmaurice possessed qualities that make a man conspicuous to all observers, from sweetmeat-seller outside the Porte to correspondents of *The Daily News*. His opponent and his critic, Sir Adam Block, President of the Ottoman Debt, ex-Dragoman to the Embassy, and the friend of the Young Turks, enjoyed a position and had a character that made him no less conspicuous.

The two men met and fought at every point ; they knew the country, the people, the language. Fitzmaurice was secretive, Block was outspoken. Fitzmaurice's brimming vitality was assertive ; Block's self-reliance was harsh. The Dragoman of the British Embassy and the President of the Ottoman Debt fought their continuous political duel. Between and above them was the British Ambassador, Sir Gerard Lowther, an honourable English country gentleman, with the ability of his family, but with no knowledge of Turkey in revolution. The dice were loaded in favour of Fitzmaurice, and the Young Turks played into his hands.

Immediately after the revolution Kiamil Pasha, the liberal, the anglophile, who had been photographed with King Edward (his chief asset in Turkey) and the father of the rascal Saïd, was made Grand Vizier to propitiate Great Britain. He was a friend of the Embassy, and in Turkey he was credited with no power of action apart from Fitzmaurice.

England, in the person of Sir Edward Grey, liked reform but disliked revolution. Liberal England was prepared to help Young Turkey academically, but was suspicious of the Turk ; and in Turkey revolution soon became more apparent than reform. Immediately after the revolution, Bulgaria proclaimed her indepen-

dence, and Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, leaving the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar as a poisoned possession to the Turks. The actual loss of the two provinces meant little in material to the Ottoman Empire, but politically it was a grave blow to the prestige of the Young Turks. Their renewed possession of the Sanjak was nothing less than an invitation to the Slavs to attack a wedge of territory that was strategically indefensible. At the date of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I had a long talk with Ghazi Mukhtar, who had for years been High Commissioner in Egypt, and an old Armenian banker, Mr. Osarian. I asked this question of Mukhtar Pasha: "Why not give up the Sanjak? Is it not territory which you cannot hold? Is not its possession a wound to you? Why put your finger between the door and the door-post?"

It was the Armenian who answered, and answered with passion: "*Nous nous sommes réformés et on nous a volé nos territoires, et maintenant vous nous dites, 'Cédez, cédez encore,' même avant que nous sommes attaqués. Jamais! nous allons tirer l'épée.*"

The position, then, in 1908, was this: a violent but bloodless change had occurred, which promised a rest and a breathing-space for all. War, for the moment, was postponed; the sword of Damocles had apparently been beaten into a ploughshare, and the ploughshare hung, not by a thread, but by a rope that was called Reform. Amnesty was open to every man. The hatchet was buried and lilies of the valley had been planted on its grave. The hope that Wyndham's Act held out to England and to Ireland was the hope that the Turkish Revolution promised for Moslem and for Christian.

The prosperous, non-political, business minorities of Constantinople—Greek, Armenian and Christian—who wanted a quiet life, were in favour of the revolution

and desired reform. Their protection by the Great Powers had been only a paper protection, useless to themselves, though useful to the more unscrupulous foreign Governments as blackmail, by which concessions could be wrung from the Porte. The Christians were generally in the power of the Turks, but the Turk's talents, his love of the spade and the wooden plough, and his aptitude for the bayonet and the rifle, needed the complementary qualities of the Christian, the trading instinct, the power of organisation ; and these services were willingly given. For long years Musurus Pasha, a Christian Greek, had been Ottoman Ambassador in London, and when the Balkan War broke out Gabriel Effendi Nouradounghian, a patriotic Armenian, was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Turkey. A story was current, and was believed, that it was an Armenian soldier in the Turkish Army who saved Constantinople, in the mists of dawn that hid the advancing Bulgarian lines.

The Ottoman Empire was rarely well-governed, and its machinery was of a very perfunctory kind ; but it worked—and not too unkindly. It was more long-suffering than the Greek, Bulgar or Serb governments. But when the day of reckoning did come it had a heavy hand. In the Greco-Turkish war in 1896 Greek clerks and employees went from Constantinople, openly, to fight for Hellas, and returned unmolested. In 1913, when the Balkans gained one smashing victory after another over the unequipped and unorganised Turkish forces, every Greek café in Pera shouted its song of triumph. The turbaned Turk took the road, and the Greek took the pavement, counting the weeks until the whole street should be his and he should acclaim King Constantine as he returned from Mass in Agia Sofia. The Turk was unbusinesslike, placid and lazy or long-suffering. But when he turned in his rage he poured out death in a bucket, and guilty and innocent

suffered from his blind anger. Yet the Moslem and the Christian in Asia Minor understood each other ; even if there was no love lost their relations were not too bad. It was Europe that, consciously and unconsciously, emphasised every difference between creeds and races. It was Europe that, both accidentally and deliberately, was responsible for the catastrophe which befell the unhappy Christian minorities in Asia. American and British missionaries were non-political, but they taught their pupils that, as Christianity was superior to Islam, so were Christians higher and better men than Moslems. In the old days the Armenians were called "*Millet-i-sadik*"—"the loyal people" ; the Karamanly Greeks, who talked only Turkish, and held their Christian services in that language, were a contented people.

But the propaganda or reconquest of Asiatic territory, which came from Athens and was known as the MEGALE IDEA (the Great Idea), communicated something of the restlessness of the Athenians to their quieter brothers of Asia Minor. History had less to do than modernism and religion with the Armenian ferment. The Armenian who had left Van a poor boy and had distinguished himself in America as an engineer had "no use" for the ways of his own people or for the Turkish Government. "Hustle" was his motto ; and he believed in a political earthquake. The Mission-taught Armenian knew that, numerically, his people represented a small percentage of the population of the Ottoman Empire. He had hereditary tenacity, but a mind that was politically confused, though financially clear. He was quick to get a mortgage on an estate ; he had less capacity to manage the estate. Though the Armenians had a future before them in the development and the improvement of Turkey, they were seduced by Europe and flattered to suicide.

Mr. Gladstone gave his left hand to Disraeli when he

made his Midlothian campaign ; Disraeli gave his right hand to Gladstone when he restored to Turkey those provinces which the Porte was unable to govern. It is impossible to speak of the Armenian people as a unit. Before the massacres of the nineties the Armenians might have been roughly classed in four categories. First, those who dwelt in the towns of Turkey. Their shrewd business capacity, and the fact that usury was open to them while it was not open to the Moslem, gave them a great commercial advantage, which entailed much unpopularity. There were, secondly, the poor Armenian villagers, scattered, unarmed, defenceless, who made a meagre living from the soil and were the constant prey of the Kurds. There were, thirdly, the Armenian mountaineers, Semites, first cousins to their enemy, the Kurds, whom they rivalled as warriors and whom they equalled in cruelty but surpassed in good faith. And, fourthly, there were the Armenian emigrants or exiles, who had much skill, on paper, in organising revolutionary committees, but with no conception of a political programme.

It was this chaotic mass of suffering, intriguing and incompetent humanity that statesmen like Boghos Nubar Pasha vainly attempted to guide and to control.

When the Great War came the Christian minorities were hailed by the French and by Mr. Lloyd George as the small allies of the Great Powers who were fighting Turkey. The Armenians, flattered by their recognition, went to the help of the invading Russian troops in 1915, and from that moment their peril became dreadful and imminent. Their doom was made irrevocable when Mr. Lloyd George, changeable in everything else, remained steadfast in his appeal to the minorities in Asia Minor to wage war on our behalf. England fought an insular and a remote Sinn Fein in Ireland with the help of the Black and Tans ; Turkey was faced with

continental Sinn Fein and she fought it relentlessly with her Bashi-bazouks.

Turkey before the Balkan War was a country rich in its established possessions, richer still in its unknown wealth. It was suffering from internal sickness caused by different and conflicting microbes. Its own doctors looked rather to their immediate fee than to healing the patient, and its foreign doctors had their eyes fixed upon usury and a deferred, and therefore accumulated, pension.

The Young Turks whom I knew best were, in my opinion, all brave men, and some of them were patriotic and wise, but the Turkish Revolution had worked no miracle in the souls of the leaders of the people.

From Constantinople I passed to Salonika, to stay with my old friends, Bertie West and his wife. I went to see Sister Augustine, who had given her life to work for the peasants of Macedonia. Sister Augustine, Lady Thompson, Nevinson, Brailsford, the Buxtons and all those who had devoted themselves to the salvation of that unhappy part of the world, were all at that moment anxious optimists.

In Salonika, the parent of the Revolution, the people were still stunned by its success. It was as if time were standing still. The river could not flow in its old course. To what sea was its new course going to take it?

I decided to ride to the Adriatic across Albania, and to take ship for Italy. I went by train to Karaferia, and arrived on an intensely hot summer evening. Two Turkish beys called, and we drank coffee in the shade of a spreading oak tree. They were dressed "*alla franga*" and wore blue celluloid collars. A gramophone shouted near us, Greeks and gipsies played the flute and sang, but none spoke to me while I talked with the beys: they were still the dominant, awe-inspiring race. I had left the friendship and the mingling of the

paces behind me, with the Flowery Revolution at Constantinople. Here I was close to the frontier, where the success of the Young Turks meant the failure of Christian ambitions. Good order, if it were established, would be the sepulchre of dreams, and justice to all men brought no hope of expanding Greek frontiers.

The next day I rode and drove towards the Pindus range. In the evening, in the villages, while the sun sank and the mountains flamed to the west, the notables would take coffee with me by a fountain or under a plane tree, and give their guarded opinion upon the future. Few, if any, Greeks welcomed the new régime. The Vlachs, on the other hand, were pleased but frightened. The machinery of government, said they, had not yet begun to work. They dreaded the rapacity of the Greeks. Brigandage had not been stamped out. Near Grevena a Greek called the Onion was said to have cut off the ears of seven Jews, and nailed them to the door of a synagogue.

At Grevena I met a timid, but enterprising, little Greek called Pierre Cielo, who had no carriage, and who feared the way before him. I offered him a seat in mine. For many years after I received letters from him. His whole soul craved for the West, and I was the most European human being that Fate had allowed him to meet. Foreign Consuls, foreign officers or men like myself, were as demigods to the poor man. Later it fell to my lot to criticise Greek policy and Greek action in bitter terms. This had no effect on Cielo: his reverence and his correspondence to me from distant Macedonian towns increased. In those days, the Great Powers had an enormous prestige which was reflected upon their subjects.

The second or third night I slept at a Bektashi monastery, where a lamb was roasted whole in my honour, with thyme and mint. The good Bektashis



were very simple people, with no knowledge of or care for politics, and not much understanding of their own intricate religion.

In one village I met a Greek Deputy. I said to him: "At last you are represented in the Chamber, and you have never had direct representation before. That is something."

"Ah," he said, "I had a bath put into my house immediately after the New Régime; but was I wise to do it? Who can say what is going to last? Will they listen to us in the Chamber? Isn't the whole thing likely to be a make-believe and a sham? And if it's not, what is to happen to the 'Megale idea'?"

That was the feeling everywhere. A reformed Turkey meant a lost Turkey to those who looked with greedy eyes at Ottoman soil. Greece could only enter into her inheritance if it became forfeit through the misrule and oppression of the Turks.

Our way lay through tremendous valleys, where classic rivers ran through golden light into the darkness of deep gorges, and the range of Pindus and the Acroceraunian Mountains shine to the south. The heat was fierce. People often joined us for protection or for company. The population of this country are chiefly pastoral Albanians, and are a kindly people where their memories have not been embittered. They are, however, not forgetful, as the heaps of white stones show where men have paid the death penalty of the vendetta.

Towards the end of the journey, after hard marching, when we had climbed to the lofty, wind-swept crest of the great mountain of Jan Kurtaran (The Saving of the Soul), which stands above the Lake of Janina, an incident occurred which had for me later a sequel in the war. At the next halt a new escort, sent from Janina, joined us, with an Albanian sergeant in command of it. He was a cheerful, willing man, with very direct

manners. At our parting I persuaded him to take a present.

"Give me yet another present, O Bey," said he. "Write down thy name and give it to me."

"That buys no coffee, O Son of the Eagle," said I, but I did what he wished.

On May 25, 1915, we had an armistice for the burial of the dead at Anzac, and I was made responsible for a difficult part of the line at Quinn's Post. As we were proceeding with the ghastly business of burial, I was suddenly slapped on the shoulder, and turned round to see, but not to recognise, my friendly sergeant of Janina. He reminded me of our meeting, and called to a number of other Albanians, telling them that I was the friend of their country: they raised unseemly cheers upon that mournful battlefield. At the end of the truce I found myself in command of an enemy detachment in the field, which must, I think, have been a unique experience in the war.

## THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION \*

AFTER the Revolution I visited Constantinople several times, and on one of these visits, in October 1911, I arrived to find the city in a state of acute political crisis.

Neither Constantinople itself, when I arrived there, nor the leisurely approach to it in the Orient Express, seemed to have changed in the last two years. Foreign diplomats in the train engaged in a desultory discussion why the rolling wind-swept miles over which we crawled remained uncultivated. Besides these, my companions were a Hungarian numismatist who talked

\* [NOTE.—The two next chapters were left in an unfinished condition and consist in part of matter gathered from the author's notes and diaries.]

most languages but his own, a Levantine guide and flatterer travelling with him, and some rather low-class German concession-hunters, dispensed the inevitable and ostentatious champagne that distinguishes the humbler branches of this industry.

All seemed the same to me as we passed the Seven Towers, standing great and broken above the blue sea in the full beauty of an autumn morning, and we shot into the familiar clamour of the station. My overcoat was handed swiftly through the window to a *hammal* (porter) and the rather superfluous wealth stored in its pockets fell in a golden shower of sovereigns on the platform and the railway line. For a moment all men held their breath, then Kurd, Turk, Albanian and half a dozen other nationalities, each in his own tongue, spoke his wonder at the wealth and habits of the Frank, and made haste to restore to me my property.

On my way through the streets, which except for a few taxicabs and the newsboys had altered little, I met Riza Bey, who had been my companion on many travels. I had much news to hear and give before I went in search of other friends. Riza took a depressing view of the situation. To find a gayer subject of conversation I asked him to sing or tell me a ballad as he unpacked my clothes, but received the eminently correct answer from a son of mountaineers that a man thinks of such things in the open and on the high hills, not in the room of a hotel. "Wait," he said, "until we travel."

The political phase through which Constantinople was passing was more or less what one had conceived it to be in England; though it was necessary to be in the place itself to understand the effect produced by the long strain. But the daily events were so crowded, rumour so profuse, prophecies of the happenings of the next few hours so blood-stirring, that it was difficult on the spot to take a detached view.

A brief summary of events is essential to understand the position, and to appreciate the fact that, upon a stage so old and worn that it should surely have not only exhausted every species of comedy but also have sounded the very depths of tragedy, actually new tragic possibilities existed.

Three years before, in 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress had come into power, and setting manfully to work it had accomplished much in Constantinople and the Provinces.

Then on April 13, 1909, the counter-revolution broke out in the capital. It was the result of internal and external forces. The Sultan, to begin with, was an oriental despot of the old type ; he did not understand reform or believe in it ; to him, it was the pale herald of the decease of his own power. His abuse of authority was like the abuse of strength by a big man ; it implied that authority was seldom exercised. Years afterwards, talking to a physician of Abdul Hamid's, I said to him, " Yes, yes, of course there was a great deal to be said for the old régime, there always is for everything, but the Armenian massacres were intolerable." He replied very slowly, " *Mon cher monsieur, avec les réformes il faut aller très lentement.*" Sudden cessation of rule by bloodshed was to his mind a dangerous and unnatural challenge to conservatism.

Now the Young Turks had got to work quickly. If the entourage of the court was not improved it was at any rate changed. They had counted upon the benevolence of the Powers while they were engaged in the operation of purging their own Augean stable. Very early, however, an accident, rather than a mistake, occurred, which made a breach in British and Young Turkish relations. A telegram was sent over the signature of King Edward VII congratulating the Sultan upon his adoption of a constitutional régime and complimenting him in warm language upon having

Kiamil Pasha at the head of affairs. This was an apparent interference in Turkish domestic policy which for my part I believed to have been entirely unintentional. It was resented, not unnaturally, by a mass of Young Turks, who knew that they and no foreigners were the saviours of their country—if indeed their country was saved. Kiamil Pasha kept away from the House; he avoided awkward interpolations, and he increased the suspicions of his opponents and alarmed them by trying to remove three regiments loyal to the Constitution, and upon whom the Committee counted, to frontier duties near Janina. Either through negligence on his part, or with his connivance, Abdul Hamid and his entourage had succeeded in bribing the Constantinople garrison and the riff-raff of the town to rise and make counter-revolutionary demonstrations. On April 13, 1909, a mob collected outside the Chamber of Deputies, and several prominent Unionists were murdered as they left the building. For some days the city was in the hands of counter-revolutionary troops, and the Ministers and the members of the Committee of Union and Progress were in hiding.

The troops at Salonika who were faithful to the Young Turks then marched upon Constantinople and invested the town. On April 24 they attacked the various barracks, and after some heavy fighting marched into Constantinople, deposed the Sultan and reinstated the Revolutionary Committee.

I had visited Constantinople in April 1909, but I missed the fighting by a few days, and only arrived in time for fierce political battles. English Constantinople was very sharply divided in its opinions. Practically all the Englishmen in Turkish service were hotly in favour of the Young Turks. Sir Gerard Lowther himself was calm and collected, but the Embassy, with the exception of the Ambassador, was supposed to be as violently old régime. Both these points of

view were perhaps natural. The Englishmen who were in Turkish service believed in the Young Turks and the possibility of the regeneration of the country. They found their colleagues easy to work with. Admiral Gamble and Sir Richard Crawford were highly esteemed by the Turks. On the other hand, the British diplomats often met with obstruction. The Turks were beginning to distinguish between the official and the individual.

My friends of the British Gendarmerie, Bonham and Steven, had travelled in hot haste from Salonika to Constantinople to report the certain and swift advance of the Constitutional troops. This news was met with complete incredulity by those whose opinions differed from their own. They afterwards gave me an account of the actual advance of the Turkish troops across the wide open space before Tashkishla Barracks. When the advancing troops had covered, perhaps, a hundred yards, a tremendous fire was opened upon them from the barracks. They halted, wavered and then broke. Their officers rallied them under cover, and they advanced again at a jogging walk, unfalteringly, some of them munching bread as they did so. Enver was there. He had got a four days' beard; his cheek was cut by a bullet and his uniform was torn. "It's all nonsense," said Steven, "these people speaking of him as if he was a silly little schoolboy."

The Salonika troops had then taken Tashkishla Barracks and put the garrison to the sword. No violence was shown in the town towards Europeans. None were killed, though an excited Greek went to Philip Graves, correspondent of *The Times*, and said to him: "Would you like to see the correspondent of *The Times* dead? He is lying in the gutter round the corner."

Abdul Hamid's friends had hit their hardest during their few brief days of power and many Young Turks

had owed their lives to their English friends. Mahmoud Mukhtar had barely escaped ; he had been hidden by the Whittalls at Moda, and Lady Whittall, in the course of protecting him, had had bayonets levelled at her. Many sought refuge in English houses in Constantinople. So when the Constitutional troops gained the upper hand, they hit back ; if an end had not been put to all ideals, an end had come to the spirit of good temper and toleration. The foreigners who supported the old régime were hated with exceeding bitterness, and the Turks who had abetted the revolution of the reactionaries were executed.

I had gone one night to stay at the Palace of Balta Liman with Damad Ferid Pasha, the brother-in-law of the Sultan, leaving very early the next morning, which was an exceedingly beautiful one. The coolness of the dawn still lingered ; Judas trees shone along the European bank of the Bosphorus ; a scented wind ruffled the water and made silver valleys between the waves of lapis-lazuli. I looked at the marble of Beshiktash, faintly flushed and phantom-fair, and suddenly saw three bodies hanging between the Palace and myself. I remembered that I had had no breakfast, and felt sick.

The collapse of the counter-revolution naturally entailed the fall of the Sultan. He was immediately dethroned and Mohammed V put in his place.

I had an opportunity of being present when for the first time in Ottoman history a Constitutional Sultan was girt with the Sword of Osman, and I wrote the following account of the ceremony to *The Spectator* :

Three days ago a friend of mine and I were present just outside the Mosque, where the equivalent in Turkey of Coronation—the Girding on of the Sword—takes place. We had been fortunate enough to attach ourselves early in the morning to a gentleman of distinc-

tion in Ottoman service, and in his company started upon our way across the Old Bridge to Eyoub.

On the other side of the Golden Horn the road was soon blocked by a string of carriages. Our coachman, after invoking the sympathy of strangers high above us in street windows and expostulating with horses, carriages, a turkey and people that filled up the road, turned up the hill of Eyoub on an experimental voyage of discovery. We found others who had failed in the same task in attitudes of dejection, cursing. The road led along the old walls, which a motley throng of sight-seers, gipsies, Jews and Armenians, had climbed.

At the Adrianople Gate we were stopped and very nearly turned away, as no member of our party had a visiting-card, but finally the uniform of our friend carried us forward triumphantly. Carriage after carriage was halted, but still we were allowed to go to where all except a few mounted officers went on foot. A lane down the narrow street brought us to a rough stand outside the Turbe or Court of the Mosque. Almost immediately opposite to us waited the four-in-hand of the Sultan, blazing with gold in the summer light. The coach, guided by a postilion who was dressed in crimson from his fez to the knees of his wide Turkish trousers, heavily braided with gold, was certainly the most, if not the only, gorgeous part of the ceremony. In the stand, where no other foreigners had obtained seats, we were treated with the usual Turkish courtesy. The best places were shown and offered us, and occasionally when the time seemed long, people would pacify us with assurances that the Padishah really was coming.

Eyoub was very different from the quiet evening place I knew, where above the white-and-green cemeteries and the glitter of the Golden Horn, witches, dressed in white, mutter their incantations into a well round which cypresses sway continually. Generally



Eyoub is a place of profound silence, of forbidden Mosques, whose fantastic golden lettering is half covered by creepers, and of a dilapidation which may be sad but is certainly not ugly.

On Monday, for a little, this outskirt awoke from a dream of Stamboul, or perhaps even Byzantium, to imitate sorely against its will Pera of to-day. There was certainly none of the fanaticism apparent that is supposed to find a home there, though the fact that we were Englishmen was not productive of that rather pathetic greeting of delight which it ensured at the Declaration of the Constitution. It was impossible not to be struck with one fact, the emphasised absence of State and religious ceremonial. It may have been that the responsible authorities considered it wiser not to initiate with regal magnificence a reign that is to be Constitutional; or possibly it was considered undesirable to lay too much stress upon a function so essentially Islamic as the assumption of the Conqueror's Sword in these days when religions clash politically. Or, again, the curious sobriety of every incident of the official arrangements might be explained by the prevalent determination to return to the simplicity of ancient times. This desire was openly expressed the other day when H.M. Mohammed V shook hands with the Deputies, as (the report continued) early Kalifs would have done had Parliamentary institutions existed in their day. Another unusual circumstance which was forced upon our attention was the almost universal uncovering of the women. Since the days of Hurriyet this has been more or less common. In the very serious situation of to-day, when fanaticism has to be conciliated on the one hand, while Europe and the many Christian sects of Turkey have to be placated on the other, this increasing breach of Moslem custom may not be without consequence.

The street that passes by the Mosque is characteristic

of any Turkish village. Its width allowed four, or at the most five, cavalymen to pass down it abreast, and even then at times they encroached upon the toes of the patient spectators. There was a certain contrast of quiet and darkness in the street compared with the exuberant sunshine, the bright dresses and gaudy tents that had made the open spaces on the way down kaleidoscopes of colour. But the dimness was only comparative, for beyond the court, in which we saw the flash of pigeons' wings, there was constantly a brilliant silver avenue in the street where the swords flashed in the light, as the soldiers saluted some officer on his way. An under-current of talk and the crying of children were general throughout the crowd.

At 12 o'clock the long cry of a muezzin rose from somewhere near us, thin and shrill, into the sunlight. It may have been the same invocation that was being called when the first Sultan made his less peaceful entry, and the prayer that rises to-day from Bokhara to Mitrovitza, or a special supplication for the new Kalif. The musical words were lost above us in the air, and in their place came cheers that told us of the progress down the Golden Horn. An interval followed during which the ceremony was taking place inside the Mosque, and then the Chelebi of Koniah, whose duty it is to gird on the sword, and to whose order of Dervishes the present Sultan belongs, passed by unostentatiously.

A movement followed, when everybody tried to obtain the best possible position from which to see. Our view was considerably obscured, if not entirely blocked, by the eagerness of a couple of men, but as the spectacle was naturally of more interest to Mohammedans than to ourselves, we did not resent this. A roughly dressed person intervened. He spoke to those between us and the coming procession, "Behold, my friends! let these Effendi see, for it touches our

honour," and the way was immediately cleared for us as the four-in-hand went slowly down the street. Mohammed V as he passed us saluted some acquaintance close by with a pleasant eagerness that was answered by cheers. In the glimpse I had seen his face seemed to me a good face, overshadowed, as was natural, by great anxiety. Such was the first Girding on of the Sword of Osman under a Constitutional régime, and I wondered what the dreamer who recognised Eyoub for the sacred place it was would have thought of it, or, indeed, what impression it made upon the Moslem crowd.

A few months ago I saw the opening of Parliament, which presented a vivid contrast to the ceremonial of last Monday. Though it is summer now, there was nothing of the gaiety that marked the people upon that clear December day when Abdul Hamid swore for the last time that tyranny should cease. Then there was silence that held the attention as much as the spontaneous surge of cheering, but three days ago there was never perfect quietness, nor irrepressible shouts of gladness. The comparative stillness that fell as the Padishah drove past seemed rather a pause of sad reminiscence than of hope, a contemplation of the past rather than a prayer for the future. For much has happened since the opening of Parliament. High expectations have failed ; Sultan Hamid has once again smirched his great office ; the Christian Powers have not shown exactly the enthusiasm for reform which might have been expected, and the people look forward without much hope to the morrow, realising perhaps for a moment what this crowd is never likely to achieve :

O Happiness, thou dewy petalled flower,  
Thy wayside blossom shall we never see ?

. . . . .

Though Europe had not been exactly enthusiastic

over this last event and the suppression of the counter-revolution, she had not been able to refuse a grudging admiration for the work of the Young Turks. But from this time onward things did not go well with the Committee. There were risings and massacres in Europe and in Asia. The Christians resented the abolition of their privileges and looked upon a reformed Turkey with a new fear, different from their mingled contempt and terror of the old régime.

The Moslems were uneasily aware that their Turkish leaders were not strict in the observance of their religion ; they grew increasingly to dislike the alliance with the Jews of Salonika, which was trumpeted to the world as a domination when M. Carasso (Israelite and Freemason) made one of the Deputation that deposed Abdul Hamid.

Whatever Abdul Hamid's crimes had been, the ex-Sultan had once stood for all Islam. If, under similar circumstances, the question of the deposition of the Pope had arisen, a good Catholic would have felt no more elation than did the average Moslem now at the intrusion of unbelievers into such proceedings. This mistake, for such it was, was seen and regretted. Personally, however, it has always seemed to me that, though considerable, the part played by Judaism in the history of Turkey from 1908 onwards has been exaggerated, especially in Europe. The Parliamentary eloquence, literary talent and organising ability of a small body of Jewish leaders made them disproportionately conspicuous ; but the fact that they identified themselves with the policy of " Ottomanisation " makes it probable that they were rather the instruments than the despots of the new régime.

But the heaviest blow to the Young Turks fell when, in the autumn of 1911, the Italians occupied Tripoli. The Opposition at once declared that not only was the Committee responsible for the chaotic results of reform

all over the Empire and incidentally for murder and terrorism, but that its inexperience and intolerance were directly responsible for Italy's action.

In the autumn of 1911 "politics" were the sole subject of discussion. The Kurds of Galata Bridge, the Levantines drinking coffee at Tokatlion and the diplomatists in the Clubs, thought of little else. Yet no one would have dreamed that the country was at war and its destiny at stake. Philo-Turks praised the admirable self-restraint and long-suffering of the people, while Turcophobes saw in it regrettable apathy, or what was worse, suppressed hysteria. The ordinary foreigner who had no interest in analysis or psychology thanked God that things were quiet, and whenever the opportunity offered spoke his doubts to other puzzled men. Ninety in a hundred of the Europeans believed that Turkey could not wage her economic war with Italy without trouble accruing in the Balkans, and that such trouble would ultimately lead to the partition of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks who took this view were chiefly of the party of the Opposition; they judged, not angrily, but sadly, that the Committee had fallen from its great purpose; that the only hope of their country now lay in accepting losses for the moment irretrievable. An ancient Grand Vizier, who was perpetually shuffling his Cabinet and controlled by a well-organized but discredited secret Committee, was thus faced by an undecided, unorganised Opposition, who believed that the robbery of their Province, and the cruelly biased verdict of Europe, had to be accepted. But these men, though they held these opinions, feared, in the state of public opinion, to do harm by preaching such a resignation; while the Committee, which had been shaken to its foundation, found it hard to abandon such a sturdy plank in its platform as the direct appeal to the religious patriotism of Islam.

The venerable Saïd Pasha, in whom the Opposition saw only a puppet moved by shadowy Semitic hands from Salonika, had two rivals—if men so unwilling to replace him as Kiamil Pasha (unacceptable to the Committee) and Hussein Hilmy (a moderate coalitionist) can be so described ; while behind the two parties stood an inscrutable figure—Mahmoud Shevket, Commander-in-Chief. Half Circassian, half Arab, it was his fate to be torn between two forces, between dreams and realities, guiding men and controlled by shadows. He had to command soldiers who were politicians, and take military counsel with men who apparently supposed armies could walk upon the sea. “He is of and not of the Committee,” I wrote at the time. “It is for him to say whether the moment has come to end a war of watchwords that daily inflames a thousand passions, and to choose between the terrible alternatives of action or passivity. Such fateful decisions are a sufficient burden for one man to bear, without the absurd and trivial duties which are thrust upon a Turkish Minister, such as of judging among a cloud of secretaries the merits of boots, or smelling and tasting the bread of the men. The strain upon the vigilance of his waking hours must be breaking him, and when it is remembered that, any night, while he sleeps, his power may be stolen from him like a cloak, it is small wonder Mahmoud Shevket is a tired man.”

Feeling was running very high before the opening of Parliament. I saw some of the leaders of both parties and gathered from them that foreign policy could not be settled until it was decided whether the Committee was, or was not, to rule. There was a lull ; both sides seemed to slip back, each trying to gauge the strength of the semi-visible organisations behind their opposing leaders.

Then a sense of the threatening national calamity

seemed to overwhelm them. There were meetings. It appeared that both sides had agreed to sink their differences ; to unite on foreign policy, " *et de s'égorger après.*" For a day this compromise was in the air. But the next a strong wave of passion, imperceptible to foreigners, set the city quivering. Shall submission be made to Jewish financial clique ? Shall the same melancholy mistakes, oppressions, infidelities be repeated for the sake of Zionism ? No : these be the work of your God, O Israel, not the God of Turkey. Is it not well known, men asked themselves, that the Committee despises the Sheriat ? Is it to keep such men in power that ancient laws are to be set aside and the flood-gates of Europe opened on a defenceless faith ? On the other side men pointed to the undoubted benefits that the Committee had conferred upon the country, to their magnanimity during the first days of their triumph and the undeniable ability and courage of its members.

Thus the whole city was wrenched and dislocated by anxiety, hatred, fear and suspicion. Yet in its streets tranquillity prevailed. You saw no signs of excitement, unless that were visible in small knots of men gathered to hear a newspaper read aloud in a low voice.

## THE BALKAN WAR

POLITICAL events in England took me home again. During the months which followed the Committee fell and Kiamil Pasha was put into power to make peace with Italy. Meanwhile Balkan troubles had come to a head. The Albanians had been in revolt and the Albanian and Italian war had shattered the remnants of the Young Turks' pres-

tige. I returned to Turkey in September 1912, riding through the Balkans. In Constantinople I found Kiamil Pasha more occupied in destroying the organisation of the Young Turks than in a constructive policy of his own. I had several interviews with the Grand Vizier himself and with members of the Committee who were in hiding. But I remained only a very short time. I returned home through Greece, where preparations for war were already obvious. To understand the situation as I found it on returning to Constantinople in February 1913, a summary of the events of the latter half of the year 1912 is necessary.

Kiamil Pasha, in spite of the weight of his years, had been recalled in the desperate belief that England would support a government over which he presided. I had myself the deepest respect for him, but it must be admitted that his administration was very far from being a success. A differently constituted mission to Greece might have easily resulted in an understanding between Greece and Turkey, and thus have left the seas open to Turkish transports during the Italian war; but the emissaries of Kiamil Pasha did not find favour in the eyes of M. Venizelos, and Turkish Diplomacy with the other Balkan Powers was not more fortunate. An interview is said to have taken place in the early summer between the Serbian Military Attaché at Constantinople and Nazim Pasha, in which the Serbian charged Nazim Pasha with mobilising a hundred thousand men in Macedonia. Nazim Pasha played a game of bluff, and admitted that this was the case. The information was then communicated to the Greek and Bulgarian Governments, who, however, had excellent reasons for knowing that this information was untrue.

The statement of Nazim Pasha afforded them a pretext, or rather justification, for preparing themselves to the last gaiter button, inside and outside



their own frontiers. Bulgarian uniforms were distributed in various centres throughout Macedonia, and, when war was declared by Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro against Turkey, the Turks were harassed and bewildered by constant attacks in the rear when they were fighting a frontal engagement.

It often happened that Ottoman forces marched through peaceful Bulgarian villages, past groups of silent, staring peasants, who only waited for the sound of battle to dress in smart Bulgarian uniforms, and with Bulgarian army rifles to fall upon their enemy from the rear. A number of Greeks in Ottoman service had also been tampered with, and telegrams with false information were sent to the Turkish generals. A sane cunning characterised every preparation of the Allies. The history of the Greek War of 1897 and of the Turkish campaign in the Yemen had convinced them that all would not be well with Ottoman organisation, and thanks to their own efficient intelligence service and their power of poisoning the springs from which the Turks drew information, this forecast was correct almost to details. They knew that Nazim Pasha, the rival of Mahmoud Shevket, had completely changed the staff and officers of the Committee, and that the new men whom he had placed in responsible positions were unfamiliar with the work allotted to them.

If the Turkish soldiers in Macedonia had been fed, if there had been even a skeleton commissariat, Turkish courage might still have been equal to the situation ; but the army suffered not only from starvation, but also lacked the means of handling the modern inventions of warfare with which it was equipped. The battles in Thrace were fought under impossible conditions, for the new Turkish staff officers were unable to make use of the field telegraphs or field telephones,

and the Turkish generals were compelled to rely upon news brought in by gallopers upon half-starved horses. To criticise the dead, and especially the fearless dead, is an ungenerous task, and I will only say that Nazim Pasha, who suffered greatly during his life for the convictions he held and had terrible odds to face at the end, failed—because failure was almost inevitable. That a series of catastrophes for his country should have been the history of his generalship was his misfortune rather than his fault. He fell, partly because his army had been beaten, and partly because he was the colleague of Kiamil Pasha, who had failed to gain the support of England, and who had all along been prepared to make peace at almost any price. In the middle of January Kiamil was driven from power and Nazim was murdered by the Young Turks, who, their hands accidentally or intentionally stained with blood, snatched a chaotic legacy, only to find themselves faced by the wolves of the Balkans, and to be dogged in their own capital by the vengeance of the friends of the slain.

In England Nazim Pasha would certainly have been deprived of his command, and Kiamil would have resigned. In Turkey things are done differently, and a Ministry does not give up its power unless it is obliged to do so. The object of Enver Bey's Young-Turk *coup* was to save something from the wreckage. Half Constantinople called the Young Turks criminals, the other half hailed them as saviours and heroes. Only one thing is certain, that they too were brave men. To fight for a forlorn hope needs courage; to mutiny, and wrest the command from those who refuse to fight, needs greater courage; to fight the forlorn hope with the probability, if not the certainty, of being shot in the back, requires the greatest courage of all. On the whole, the people agreed with the action of the Committee. The friends of Nazim were naturally

savagely indignant ; the followers of Kiamil were angry, though tepid ; but the mass of the Moslems believed that, thanks to the Young Turks, an ignominious surrender had been escaped. It was said, and probably with a great deal of truth, that Kiamil, intent upon signing peace, had ordered beforehand the arrest of two hundred and fifty Committee men upon the day following his fall, and that it was knowledge of this which had forced the hand of Enver and his comrades.

Napoleon could hardly have redeemed the military, nor Talleyrand the diplomatic situation. The only consoling factor to the Turk was the evident anger and concern among his enemies at the new turn of affairs. The Bulgarians were furious ; the anti-Turkish Press of England was acrimonious and didactic. But this consolation weighed but lightly in the scales against the facts. The banks of Europe were closed against the Young Turks. There was no question of paying the troops ; the best that could be hoped for was to pay for their food.

Diplomacy, an aristocratic trades union, jealous of its conventional and traditional secrecy, loathed the invasion of its privileges by an irregular and sometimes invisible band of men ; blue blood and red tape made a natural alliance, hostile to improvised diplomacy. Cheating, in international politics, has a legitimised ancestry, but its procedure must be correct. Still, the tide of disaster was checked. On the battlefield, rout had followed defeat ; the Committee appeared for the moment, at any rate, to have turned the military and diplomatic checkmate at least into a drawn game. Adrianople had held out stubbornly, heroically, indifferent to famine, bombardment and disease, or to the moral shock of news of a revolution in the capital. One result of that might well have been the fall of Adrianople, in which case the Young Turks would have had short shrift,

In passing a curious fact may be noted : Scutari, Janina and Adrianople, a gallant trinity, had held out with the same unadvertised heroism that marked the siege of Sanaa, some years before, where nine out of eleven thousand Turks had died of starvation before the city was surrendered to the Arabs. The British Press had to some extent patronised the courage that held Janina and Scutari for the Albanians, but there was not even a grudging praise for the soldiers of Adrianople. And the reason was not far to seek : England supposed that the fall of Adrianople would do much to extricate Europe from the entanglements of the Balkan War. But the slow starvation of that garrison had been rather the result of a trick than the success of the Bulgarian forces : for when the armistice was first concluded, the original terms stipulated that the fortress was to be revictualled. But this clause was not, through an unfortunate oversight, inserted in the armistice actually signed by the Turks. And a second and perhaps even more serious mistake was made, when the Porte offered no adequate protest on the grounds that every armistice of an undefined duration must include the revictualling of besieged garrisons. The mistake was due to the Turks' belief that the Bulgarians sincerely desired a termination to the war, and that peace would be speedily concluded.

Meanwhile, during the slow agony of the siege, a hostile population of many thousands of Greeks and Bulgars in the town had been consuming food which might have sustained the soldiers, and had, when possible, given information to the armies that beleaguered the city. There cannot be much doubt as to how the generals of the Allies would have behaved had any one of them been in Shukri Pasha's place. Moreover, the news from the outside world which penetrated to the imprisoned army had been of a consistently depressing character : the reverses in

Macedonia, the fall of Monastir and the northern towns, the taking of Janina, Kiamil Pasha's attempt to make peace at the price of Adrianople, the Committee's Revolution, the death of Nazim Pasha and of the son-in-law of Shukri Pasha himself. Such tidings must always be damaging to the *moral* of any soldiers in the world. What man, still more what body of men, will starve to death with the knowledge that the sacrifice is wasted and that their life is given to no purpose? The Bulgarians were careful to let the Turks know that divided counsels and partisan hatred had taken possession of Constantinople; that any day the long-drawn gallantry of the defenders might be made fruitless by a wider surrender.

But if leadership in Adrianople had been hard, neither had policy been easy in Constantinople itself. At the beginning of the Conference in London the Balkan claims were very different from their statement of them at the opening of the war; but as the Conference continued it became obvious to M. Daneff and King Ferdinand that Serbia and Greece would have to be paid in part out of the Bulgarian spoils, and with territory which the Bulgarians looked upon as their own heritage. Therefore the severity of the terms demanded from the Turks by the Bulgarians increased. M. Daneff's rôle changed from that of diplomat to the part of a Bismarckian auctioneer.

The Turkish Delegates, presumably the Ambassadors and probably Serbia and Greece, were treated with the same charming suavity—"Here are my terms; take them or leave them." As far as the Porte was concerned, the terms were almost impossible to accept. Both Kiamil and Nazim had been desirous to do so, but their attempt at solving the question by surrender had ended in the voluntary exile of the one and in the death of the other. It was not fear for their own lives that drove them to ask for the intervention of

Europe, but the impossible position which they had assumed in order to save their country.

In the last week in March Adrianople surrendered ; in March, too, there were heavy falls of snow, which prevented any attempt to relieve the pressure on the Tchatalja lines. Terrible weather stopped Enver Bey's landing on the flank of the Bulgarians in front of the Tchatalja lines, while a counter-revolution threatened the Young Turks at Constantinople.

The banks of France and England had been closed to Turkish appeals, no matter from which Government they might come, Young Turk or Kiamilist. The Serbians, Montenegrins and Bulgarians had been furnished with Russian advice at first, and then with Russian money, aviators and officers, so consequently when Europe collectively begged the Porte to surrender, this pacifist advice was not as unpalatable as might have been expected.

But genius and fatalism sometimes accomplish what is apparently impossible, and fatalism on this occasion had reasons for committing what at first sight seemed *hara-kiri*. Russia and Austria were not at one, and a compromise between the two Powers was the only medium by which a settlement could be reached, while almost any compromise would have been advantageous to Turkey in comparison with the extreme demands of the original terms of peace. The squabble of two empires, Russia and Austria, had found its counterpart in the quarrel of two kingdoms, Bulgaria and Roumania. Homogeneous and bellicose kingdoms are, however, less easily soothed by diplomacy than empires divided by a difference. The casual onlooker who spends some time in the Roumanian capital observes that Bukarest is gay, and the European Press took the view that the Roumanian would be affable and careless in the matter of the readjustment of the frontier. But the Turks knew that behind the light Parisian veil of Bukarest

lay the acquisitiveness of the Roumanian peasant, not a whit inferior to that of his uncouth Bulgarian neighbour, and they waited stubbornly in the hope of gaining so redoubtable an ally.

Lastly, there was a pathetic belief at Constantinople that if there was no change of policy in Europe, there would at least be some glimmer of sympathy, if not among the politicians, among the European peoples. It had been asserted that twenty-five thousand Albanians, non-combatants, had been massacred by the Serbians, and that assertion had not been contradicted ; mosques that had sheltered only women and children had been blown up ; Sandansky and other Bulgarian komitadjis had raped, robbed and put whole villages to the sword. Europe had heard of these things.

The Turks still clung pathetically to the idea that the Gladstonian tradition, which was once the creed of Christendom and abhorred such things, was still alive. They believed that letters which put so plain a case touched the hearts of the readers of *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily News* or *The Times*, and must react upon the conscience of the editors of the newspapers.

Thus the expectation of foreign quarrels and the hope of the birth of an European conscience were the external reasons for the continuation of the war. The internal reasons were more formidable.

[Such is Aubrey Herbert's account of the events which led up to the state of things he found in Constantinople February and March 1913, but of his visit unfortunately only a few rough notes remain. He stayed a fortnight in the snow-bound city, watching the last stages of the struggle along the Tchatalja lines which reduced Constantinople to something like a state of siege. Hurried as these jottings are, they suggest part of what he would have written.]

"Bosphorus bleak and cold ; many Turks apathetic ; guns on the point ; passengers silent—for the first time

I have seen Levantines chilled ; the impression is, Constantinople may be lost ; the Turks are not only divided, some Unionists being for the war, others against it, but completely ignorant ; at the Dutch hospital the wounded asked, ' Are we fighting for Germans or Russians ? ' . . . The dogs are back ; there is snow on the mountains. A pause in the fighting. No one allowed to visit the front or even rescue the wounded from Gallipoli. . . . Brilliant day, the roofs of Pera covered with snow. Visited Doughty Wylie's hospital and talked to the wounded : horrible wounds—nurses Greek or Armenian—one man who had mutilated his own hand was cured and then shot. Wounded taught to count in English to pass the time. Constantinople the same town, only sadder : glittering, cold weather ; sails on the Golden Horn ; old fakirs squatting beside heaps of snow ; wounded men trudging past advertisements of Nestlé's Milk, etc. ; few carriages and old horses. No soldier receives special consideration ; it is '*asker destur*' (soldier, out of the way). . . . I'm sick of the whole tribe of correspondents : the difficulty in making peace is that the army won't, and if disbanded it would make trouble in the provinces. Went up to Stamboul and saw Talaat. Asked him if he was afraid to die. He said : ' No, it's darned easy to die—takes two minutes, and I shall be glad of some rest.' Asked him again if he could give up Janina and the Greek islands on the condition they were not fortified. ' How,' he answered, ' are we to know the conditions will be kept ? ' I replied that a European guarantee in the case of Greece was more likely to be valid than in the case of the Balkan States. Talked of Anglo-philism in Turkey : he is a wily child. We saw Mahmoud Shevket, very attractive man, and Talaat said he believed they could fight for five months ; though India and Egypt are unlikely to subscribe more than three-quarters of a million, but without interest,



Many of the people I have seen are bound to be shot when peace is declared, and there seems a good chance of the Sultan going and Yussuf Izzadin succeeding. Abdul Medjid is unpopular, as he is anti-Committee. After lunch visited the Heir-Apparent. He said it was a pity England was so anti-Turk, while the Turks were pro-English. They still remembered the Crimea. Interview very royal ; you speak when you're spoken to. He seemed a thoroughly intelligent man."

[Thus these jottings run on, mostly staccato records of political conversations, with now and again a note as characteristic of the writer himself as this : "quarrelled with the waiter about goldfish. Opened his eye against the electric light to show how it must hurt the lidless eyes of a fish."

Meagre and broken as these records of impressions are, they can be supplemented by a poem he wrote at the time, which expressed well his sense of the tragedy he watched day by day : ]

There falls perpetual snow upon a broken plain,  
And through the twilight filled with flakes the white earth joins the  
sky.

Grim as a famished, wounded wolf, his lean neck in a chain,  
The Turk stands up to die.

Intrigues within, intrigues without, no man to trust,  
He feeds street dogs that starve with him ; to friends who are his foe,  
To Greeks and Bulgars in his lines, he flings a sudden crust—  
The Turk who has to go.

By infamous, unbridled tongues and dumb deceit,  
Through pulpits and the Stock Exchange the Balkans do their work,  
The preacher in the chapel and the hawker in the street  
Feed on the dying Turk.

The Turk worked in the vineyard, others drank the wine,  
The Jew who sold him ploughshares kept an interest in his plough.  
The Serb and Bulgar waited till King and Priest should sign,  
Till Kings said, " Kill, kill now."

So now the twilight falls upon the twice betrayed,  
The *Daily Mail* tells England and the *Daily News* tells God,  
That God and British Statesmen should make the Turks afraid—  
Who fight unfed, unshod.

[In April Peace was signed, but in July war broke out between the allies ; and in the autumn, in defiance of warnings from the Great Powers, the Turks reoccupied Adrianople, which the Bulgarians, after their defeat, could no longer hold.

Aubrey Herbert did not return to Turkey again before the outbreak of the war in 1914, and he had no opportunity of observing closely the drift of events which finally led to the fatal alliance between Turkey and Germany. He was in Constantinople for the last time during the days of allied occupation. His views upon the later developments in the Turkish Empire will be found in the two following articles ; one written after a secret interview with Talaat Pasha in 1921 and the other, "New Turkey," during the Lausanne Conference of 1923.]

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**PART VI**  
**TALAAT PASHA**  
**NEW TURKEY**



## PART VI

### TALAAAT PASHA

**I** MET Talaat Pasha when he first came into power, after the Turkish Revolution of 1908, and subsequently saw him in his days of prosperity and in his days of adversity. I knew him when he was concentrating the entire energies of his strong personality on Ottomanising the Turkish Empire ; and later when, after the lesson of the Albanian rebellion, he had come to the conclusion that the only hope for his country was decentralisation and autonomy for the provinces like Albania and Arabia.

Some time after the Armistice, when the Chief Censor still sat upon his throne, I received a letter from Talaat Pasha, in which he declared that he was not responsible for the Armenian massacres, that he could prove it, and that he was anxious to do so. He said that he believed that good relations between Britain and Turkey were essential to the welfare of both peoples, and he invited me to meet him in any neutral country that I chose to name. I was startled at receiving this letter, and took it to a distinguished man who is famous for his spotless integrity.

"I want you to listen to this letter," said I, as he ate his breakfast, and I translated it to him. When I came to the signature, the man of spotless integrity leapt to his feet as if he had been stung.

"What did you want to bring me into this for? Couldn't you have left me out? It's illegal to correspond with the enemy." I told him that I wanted the

support of his excellent reputation ; I wished to be in good company when I was engaged in doubtful proceedings. However, after discussing the pros and cons, I wrote to Talaat Pasha, saying that I was very glad to hear that it was not he who was responsible for the Armenian massacres, but that I did not think any useful purpose could be served by our meeting at that time.

In February 1921 Sir Basil Thomson asked me to see him at Scotland Yard. He invited me to go out immediately to Germany to meet Talaat Pasha. I told Sir Basil that I was prepared to go for him, but I had no confidence in the *bona fides* of Mr. Lloyd George and his Government, and I asked him to put his request in writing, which he did.

I arrived at the German town of Hamm on February 26. It was a miserable industrial village, that seemed to be inhabited by potential suicides. In Germany generally, I had the impression that one has on a battlefield after the battle is over—the effort is finished, and the work that remains is to bury the dead. Talaat sent me an unsigned telegram to say that he was coming, and arrived at nine o'clock that evening. "Ah!" he said, "how many things have happened since we last met." He had brought a primitive dinner with him, which he ate in his bedroom, for I had dined before he came.

He had grown much thinner, and his good looks were sinister ; his black hair was turning grey ; his eyes were very bright, glittering while he talked like the eyes of a wild animal in the dusk. The urbanity of his manners remained the same. He was neat and well dressed, but obviously poor.

We discussed our future plans, and I said : "Highness, you Turks are very inconsiderate in the places you select for me to meet you. First the Dardanelles, and now this horrible town, Hamm, where you and I

together are as conspicuous as a monument. On the principle of hiding a pebble on the beach or a flower in the garden, I suggest to you that we go somewhere else, where we can move in crowds." "Anything you like," said Talaat. "We will go to Düsseldorf to-morrow."

That night he and I were both tired, and did not talk long. He talked frankly and with detachment. He was like a man who, after a great catastrophe, sums up his position, speaking of his liabilities with a wry smile, and of his assets with some complacency. He himself had always been against the attempted extermination of the Armenians ; it was, in any case, impossible, and a country that adopted such methods cut itself off from civilisation. He had twice protested against this policy, but had been overruled, he said, by the Germans. "In England you hear only one side of the case," he said. "Now, I don't know what is happening in Ireland, and I don't believe all I hear, but you are certainly doing some very stiff things to the Sinn Feiners ; and, after all, what is your Irish problem to ours of Armenia ? Can any nation go through a war and acquiesce when it is stabbed in the back ? What would you have done if you had had Sinn Fein enclaves all over England, fighting you during the war ?" He said that he was in favour of granting autonomy to minorities in the most extended form, and would gladly consider any proposition that was made to him.

"You remember," he said, "years ago, I asked you to go to Lord Milner and beg him to become Governor-General of Armenia. I knew that we had either to reform ourselves or to perish, and I knew that we were incapable of reforming ourselves when every man's hand was against us, and all the world was waiting to exploit our country. But your Government, rightly or wrongly, had decided upon a Russian policy, and would lend no official support to Englishmen entering



Turkish service, or, indeed, do anything that was disliked by St. Petersburg. You English cannot divest yourselves of responsibility in this matter. We Young Turks practically offered Turkey to you, and you refused us. One undoubted consequence has been the ruin of the Christian minorities, whom your Prime Minister has insisted on treating as your allies. If the Greeks and the Armenians are your allies when we are at war with you, you cannot expect our Turkish Government to treat them as friends."

The next morning we left for Düsseldorf. As we walked to the station, I asked him whether he did not think that power was the dearest thing on earth to men. He answered that it was the dearest thing that he had known, and that nothing compared with it; but that one could have too much of a good thing, and that he was not anxious to be tried in the future as he had been in the past. He was very anxious for a settlement, and he was well placed to arrange a settlement, for he was in touch with Mustapha Kemal, and indeed all those in authority in Turkey.

We took an empty second-class compartment, but as we left the station a German engineer entered our carriage. Talaat said, in Turkish, to me, "We cannot talk French in Germany; it is too unpopular, and I do not know English. We had therefore better talk Turkish." To this I answered, "As you like, although my Turkish is rusty."

The German engineer, who was intelligent and bloodthirsty, interrupted politely, "Was für eine Sprache sprechen Sie?" (What language are you talking?) "Turkisch," said Talaat, and for some time we all three talked bad German, which he occasionally translated, for my benefit, into Turkish.

Then Talaat said to me, speaking in Turkish: "A curious thing has happened. This German believes

that you also are a Turk, as he hears you talk Turkish to me. Now, for the first time, you are going to hear the whole truth about the Allies and your own country." I said to Talaat, "Please do not lead him on, for if he attacks my country I shall answer him." Talaat's reply was, "This conversation is going to be extremely interesting for me."

The German, answering Talaat's skilful questions, said that he believed the English were the cleverest people in Europe and the easiest to deal with, and that England and Germany could come to terms without difficulty, for, although they were rivals, they had many common interests. It was a different matter when he spoke of the French. He spoke of France with unmeasured and immeasurable bitterness. "Fighting, conquering and being beaten Germans understand," said he; "we would be hypocrites to pretend anything else. We have been beaten, and we accept our defeat. Essen was the pride of our country; it made guns, it was the strength of Germany; now we must make sewing-machines instead of machine-guns. What we do not understand is all this sanctimonious talk to which we are being subjected in our humiliation. Let conquerors dictate their terms as conquerors; do not let them pretend that there is civilisation or Christianity behind them when they inflict such terms upon us."

He had the Teutonic instinct of the showman which we share. He was almost passionately anxious that Talaat and I should see Frau Krupp's villa outside Essen, and realise her many virtues. Not even the Bolsheviks had attacked her when they were in power, he told us, and she was a simple kindly German woman. Talaat Pasha made caustic comments in Turkish.

The German engineer had been to Russia. "Petrograd is a very sad place now," said he. "It always

was a sad place," replied Talaat. "The Russian is a kind man; he is a brute when he is in a crowd. Bolshevism is the essence of the Russian crowd."

At Essen the German engineer got out, with cordial farewells to his Turkish ally, mixed with a great blast of invective against the French. "We are beaten, utterly beaten," said he; "but you cannot keep a nation such as ours down for ever. We will never forget the French insults, and the black troops, and the time will come when our children, or our grandchildren, will march into France, and we will finish with the French once and for all. I shall not see it, but I am happy in the knowledge that it will come to pass."

I had other opportunities of hearing the conversation of Germans, and I do not believe that this engineer was exceptional. I had never seen such hatred in the war: it was so savage that one felt it like a concrete thing.

For the next two days the ex-Grand Vizier and I had many conversations, which were sometimes reminiscent and desultory, and at other times very much to the point for the purpose of the memorandum I was to write for Sir Basil Thomson; and I have thought it best to divide our conversations into two parts—firstly, his war memories and generalisations; and secondly, his sketch of an Anglo-Turkish agreement, with the advantages that it would bring to both countries.

"Rightly or wrongly," said Talaat Pasha, "you made friends with Russia: that was your policy at home, and that was your policy at the Embassy in Constantinople. I liked Sir Gerard Lowther; he was an English gentleman, and I suppose he carried out his orders; but never, I think, in the history of the world, did one Power have such a commanding position and so obsess another as did Great Britain Turkey

when we made our revolution. For if the leaders liked you, the people adored you ; they took the horses out of your Ambassador's carriage and they pulled it up to the Embassy. That was a very little thing, a small symbol ; they would have let it go over their bodies if he had wished it. There was nothing in those days which we would not have given if you had asked it of us. But you wanted nothing of us, and gratitude cannot live on air. The Ambassador was cold ; Fitzmaurice was hostile ; we had to find means to live. But even after our estrangement, we still tried to regain your friendship. We accepted Kiamil, our determined opponent, as Grand Vizier, to please you. It did not please you—nothing that we could do pleased you. You drove us into the arms of Germany. We had no alternative : anything else was political death and partition."

I asked him at what point friendly relations between ourselves and Turkey became impossible. He said, at the time when Mr. Asquith made his speech on the question of Adrianople. Sir Edward Grey saw Tewfik Pasha ; he and Mr. Asquith both said the same thing, publicly and privately. " If the Turks go to Adrianople, they must take the consequences."

Talaat continued : " I went to the Turkish Cabinet, and said : ' This is bluff ; neither Russia, France nor England is prepared to do anything. I resign now. You can continue, but I shall go down to the Chamber and will tell them why I have resigned, and you will fall.' Meanwhile troops marched on Adrianople, and British prestige received a great blow, as no penalty followed."

He then talked about the war, and his own experiences in it. He said that in his opinion soldiers were the salt of the earth, but that they were often stupid people. He himself had been present when the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had been signed. Czernin

was also there, but they had been beaten by Ludendorff and Hoffmann. Ludendorff counted for everything, the Kaiser for very little. Talaat Pasha said that once Count Czernin had shouted in a burst of passion: "By God, if I ever have a reincarnation I shall be born a British subject, even if I have to be born black." "Ah," said Talaat, "I do not know if he would say that now. It is sad for you; you have lost a great deal of your prestige."

Talaat went to Bukarest, but would not sign the Treaty. He broke off relations with the Germans over the question of the Dobrudja. He said that this action of his was supposed to be responsible for the fall of Radislavoff, whose place was taken by Malinoff.

I asked him what had been their relations with the Germans during the war. He laughed and said, "Détestable." He said that what the Turks had wished for was not a war that should end war, but a war without a decisive victory on either side. If we won, as we had won, it meant the partition of Turkey. If, on the other hand, Germany won, it meant the enslavement of Turkey. On one occasion a Q.M.G. arrangement had been come to between the Turks and the Germans without his knowledge. He found himself completely handcuffed by the Germans, and said to the Council of Ministers, "I often wondered why the English wanted to fight the Germans, but now I know."

He talked at length of the end of the war. He had been on a mission in Europe, where he had seen the kings, the military leaders and the politicians. His account was dramatic. He had seen the Emperor Charles, who was, he said, "bon enfant" in Austria. The Emperor, he said, wanted peace, in order to enjoy his Empire, and for his Empire's sake; the continuation of war would be the end of Austria. He saw Hindenburg, who said that the time for making peace

was over-ripe. He talked with the Kaiser. "Quand le Kaiser m'a vu, il a crié, 'Eh bien, Talaat, si c'est la trahison de vouloir la paix, moi aussi je suis traître. Je veux la paix.'" He returned to Turkey with Tewfik Pasha, whose son was Talaat's military secretary. On the way they received a telegram inviting them to the palace at Sofia for an audience with the Tsar Ferdinand. Then came another telegram cancelling the first, and saying that there would be a reception at the station for them. Tewfik Pasha was inclined to be affronted, but Talaat told him that the Tsar Ferdinand was "un homme très rusé," and would not have changed the programme without a very good reason.

There were enormous crowds at the station at Sofia. "Moi j'ai aperçu tout de suite que quelque chose s'était passé." Malinoff came up to Talaat and said, "It is finished. The 11th Division have broken; Bulgaria is done, and we have sued for an armistice." Talaat replied, "You are wrong to have done this; we should all have asked for an armistice together. What terms shall we be given now?"

He went to see King Ferdinand. That monarch talked to him only of the character of the new Sultan, and Turkish politics. He avoided immediate political issues. Talaat grew restive, and interrupted: "Your Majesty, I have had an hour's talk with Malinoff, and I know what has happened. What are you going to do now?" King Ferdinand, he said, threw out his arms in a gesture of despair.

Prince Boris, said Talaat, had great charm, but he did not believe that he took the defeat very much to heart. He showed no sorrow, and in the ex-Grand-Vizier's opinion he was as much in favour of peace as was the Emperor Charles, though possibly for different reasons.

Tewfik and Talaat pursued their journey to Con-

stantinople, where Talaat Pasha laid his resignation before the Sultan, who refused to accept it. Talaat said to the Sultan: "It is essential for your Government to have some one else to talk to the victors. They do not like me: my personality is disagreeable to them. Choose Rahmy; they will be glad to have discussions with him." Talaat's advice was not taken, but he was allowed to resign.

He spoke with angry indignation of the imprisonment of Eyub Sabri, his friend, and of Rahmy Pasha and other Turks who were our prisoners in Malta. By what right, he asked, were these men—many of whom had been against the war, and were pro-British—seized during the Armistice and imprisoned for two years without a trial? No other country had been treated like that. "It is only to us poor Turks, to whom you are always preaching principles, that you behave like that," said Talaat Pasha.

Khairy Effendi, formerly Sheikh-ul-Islam, had been in the Government that had declared war upon us. He was liberated, while others, who had opposed the war, were held prisoners. It was possible that Rahmy Pasha had been imprisoned in Malta because of the expulsion of the Greeks, but as a matter of fact Rahmy had vehemently opposed this measure. He knew that the littoral Greeks (Greeks on the coast) would give the Allies what assistance they could, but he thought their help would be insignificant; and he believed that if they were expelled, it might very easily bring King Constantine and the Greeks into the war against Turkey. But the Germans had insisted, and neither Talaat nor Rahmy felt that they could be "*plus royaliste que le roi*."

Rahmy had treated the English throughout the war with a friendship that was more than consideration. He asked me if Rahmy had not been officially thanked by our Minister in Athens, Sir Francis Elliot, for his

kindness to our people. I answered that all he said was true, and made Englishmen like myself very heartily ashamed. Our Government was sent to us as an affliction from God.

The ex-Grand Vizier talked much about himself. He said that he was born a rebel, and that when he was young he had read much French literature, which added an extra varnish to his mutinous soul. The condition of Turkey was enough to make any one, with a spark of manhood in him, fierce. Talaat came across the infamous Fehim, Chief Constable of Constantinople, whose amiable habit it was to seize any woman who caught his fancy, forcing her husband to play some version of the part of Uriah.

I asked him if he thought the spies of Abdul Hamid very efficient. "No, not very," said he. "Mine were fairly good, I think; but then, I had much to appeal to with my people, and also I used your English system." "What?" said I. "Well," he said, "we were told that the noble youths of England offered their service gratis to the secret police. Was not that true?"

I remembered how I had found myself in Turkey some ten years before, when the Committee had fallen from power, and when the position was extremely precarious, and as I had been friendly with Talaat in the days of his greatness, I went to see him in Constantinople in the day of his defeat. We were in the office of the Committee of Union and Progress, and as he and Djemal Pasha and I were passing through a dark hall, a man stepped out from the shadows, holding something to Talaat's chest. I imagined that it was an attempt at assassination; it turned out, however, to be only a petition.

As we drove through the streets of Stamboul in a carriage, I asked him if he was afraid of being murdered. He answered me that life was so hard that, if one had



to fear death also, the burden would be too heavy to bear. On this occasion I repeated my question, and asked him if assassination was often in his mind. He said that he never thought of it. Why should any one dislike him ? I said that Armenians might very well desire vengeance, after all that had been written about him in the papers. He brushed this aside.

He made a number of inquiries about old friends, and asked warmly after Louis Mallet. Speaking of Enver, I said I liked him, and thought him modest, but not at all clever. "No," he said, "you could not call him clever, though he is a brave man and patriotic."

He spoke of his own family ; he was living with his wife in Berlin, he said, and, like most people, he had been selling all that was available ; but he looked forward to a swift ending of these troubles. England and Turkey would soon be on terms of friendship.

Next morning, he told me that good news had come from England. Bekir Sami Bey had been invited to tea with the Prime Minister. They had, he believed, agreed upon the autonomy of Armenia, where the majorities were recognised, and to an inquiry in Thrace and Smyrna.

"Now," said the ex-Grand Vizier, "let me make a summary of my proposals to you, which amount to an Anglo-Turkish alliance. Though I am not in power at the present moment, you will find that these proposals are acceptable to those who are, and their acceptance will bring peace to you as well as to us.

"Let us realise the present complicated position," said he. "My thesis is, that there is only one civilisation in the world, and that if Turkey is to be saved she must be joined to civilisation. Before the war, I was anxious that England should be her teacher ; you will remember that, and my proposals about Lord Milner. Well, England refused, and the war came ; then, quite frankly, I looked to Germany in

victory to do what we had once hoped for from England. For I believed that Germany would win the war. In that belief we signed a treaty with Germany one month before war was declared. Germany has not won ; we have all been defeated.

"The house that we had has been burnt to the ground, but that house was badly built ; it was full of draughts, and it was not sanitary. We still possess the site upon which it stood. Our geography is a fortress to us—a very strong fortress. Our mountains are the strongest of our forces. You cannot pursue us into the mountains of Asia ; and stretching back into Central Asia are six republics, composed of men of our blood, cousins, if not brothers, and united now by the bond of misfortune. I will speak of that later. Then, too, the war forced us to cut our losses, and that is an advantage. We shall be no more troubled by the rebellions of the Albanians, the Macedonians and the Arabs," said the ex-Grand Vizier.

He elaborated the situation. The urgent need of Turkey was to be helped, and for this help he and his friends looked eagerly to Great Britain. But the Turks would not accept help at the price of financial or military servitude. Mr. Lloyd George, in his opinion, had believed that Turkey could be destroyed, and had been persuaded that this was the case by his Greek friends, Venizelos and Sir Basil Zaharoff. Mr. Lloyd George was wrong. Talaat did not wish to exaggerate the strength of Turkey, but he thought that England ought not to underrate it. If there was not a unity of ideas between Angora and Constantinople, there was, at any rate, unity of ideals.

"Now," he said, when again speaking of the six Red republics, "they are red, but not deep red. They are Moslem populations, and are naturally influenced by all that Turkey does, and they are affected by all that Turkey suffers. Bokhara is a potential force ;

there are latent possibilities to be developed there for good or for evil. At the present moment," Talaat Pasha continued, " Turkey is at war with England, and we are engaged in propaganda throughout the East, and inciting India, though not very effectually. Turkey is, in fact, pursuing a policy of enlisting as many people as she can against Great Britain, and undertaking all possible reprisals open to her."

It was, he admitted, an ineffective reply to the French policy of conscription of native races in Africa, and it was a pity that this policy of Turkish propaganda had not been begun earlier, and had not been better organised.

" It is not a grand policy," he said. " No grander than yours has been. Yours was a violation of the Armistice, and ours was the best that we could do." He said it was a "*jeu de gamin*," and compared it to cutting telegraph wires. That might do very little damage, but, on the other hand, it might do a great deal of harm.

" Turkey," he said, " is a Power, and, do what you will, she will remain a Power. There is, at the present moment, only a political hatred of Great Britain in Turkey." He would go so far as to say that there was more hostility to us amongst the Arabs and the Hindus than amongst the Turks. The Crimea, although it happened long ago, was not forgotten ; the Dardanelles would not weigh in the balance against it. England had often intervened on behalf of the Turks, and they were a grateful people. He could not pretend to know the Indian question, but he did not believe that there was any real hatred of us in India.

He discussed Bolshevism with acute dislike. He said it might suit Russia ; it could not suit the rest of the world. The human race could not change, or, at any rate, not to that extent, outside Russia. It

could not accept such a lunatic system. "But," he continued, "as the Russians chose to go in for Bolshevism, that is their business. There is no danger to Turkey in it now; nor do I consider that it is a peril to England, as long as it remains in its own borders, and with propaganda for its only weapon."

There were many of his countrymen who hoped that Bolshevism would boil over the Russian border, and go foaming into Europe, foreseeing salvation to Asia in a general European catastrophe. He was not one of those. He did not want a safety that came from ruins. He preferred to see an ordered Europe, and a peaceful Turkey helped by Great Britain. But he would refuse to join an anti-Bolshevist alliance at the present moment, when his country was at war.

Men, said the ex-Grand Vizier, were Bolshevik by conviction, by policy, or by interest. He might be the last; he was certainly not the first. An alliance with the Bolsheviks was purely a matter of expediency. You might say it was a double-edged sword, but its edge, as far as the enemies of Turkey were concerned, was sharp, and its dangerous edge to Turkey was very blunt. The Turk and the Bolshevik had nothing in common but a temporary alliance, a convenience from the point of view of Russia that answered a need from the point of view of Turkey.

He had not been to Moscow recently, nor had he seen Lenin, but he had seen Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk, and had a poor opinion of him. Trotsky, he thought, like the majority of the Russian Jews, was a degenerate.

He told me that Enver was at the moment in Moscow, for the same reason that he, Talaat, might have been there, not through any liking of Bolshevism. Enver, he said, was colourless, as far as policy was concerned. He was doing the best in his power for his country.

Halil Pasha (whom I had last seen between Sanayat and Kut on the day that Townshend surrendered) was also in Moscow. He was an exception, and had a *penchant* towards communism. Djemal Pasha was engaged in propaganda against Great Britain in Turkestan.

He spoke of the natural antagonism between the principles of Bolshevism and Islam: fire and water were not more different. I asked him what part pan-Islam was likely to play in the future, and he expressed the Nationalist, or the Young Turks' point of view. Islam, he said, in itself is a grand religion, and though it was preached in the desert, it is still compatible with civilisation, and can be adapted to modern needs. But, in common with all other religions, it can swiftly become intolerant in the hearts of fanatics. By their actions the Young Turks had shown that they did not mean to use pan-Islam as a weapon. That had been the policy of Abdul Hamid, but it was a short-sighted policy, because in the end it could not succeed, and meant war between Islam and the rest of the world, and that could have no other result for Islam as a creed than fanaticism and barbarism.

The deeds of the Young Turks were a proof that they did not favour pan-Islam. Had they not incurred the greatest unpopularity by putting the *rayah* (native Christian) on a level with the Moslem? There were other features of their policy that gave offence—amongst them their intention to abolish polygamy. His party had deliberately adopted the milder and less fanatical creed which was useless as a fiery torch.

He spoke of the Caliphate question, using the usual arguments, and again wondered what demon of madness had taken possession of the British Government. If the question of the Caliphate was satisfactorily settled, a big step would be taken to restore

our popularity among the Indians. I said it was always more easy to raise a storm than to allay it ; and I asked him if there was any Turk with sufficient prestige to calm the Indian agitation, if such a course was ever desired by Great Britain. He said that the trouble in India would cease automatically when we entered into friendly relations with Turkey. We could send any Turk to India whom we pleased. He laughed, and added, " It is very unlikely that your Government would trust me. But if they did, I would guarantee to do my best."

I asked him if he thought it likely that the pan-Turanian movement would develop. He answered that the events of the last years had given all those who were related a closer sense of kinship. Often men only remembered a poor brother when they themselves became poor, but he saw no future in our lives for Turanianism, though Asiatics were drawing closer to each other.

He said that he had written a memorandum on the Armenian massacres which he was very anxious that British statesmen should read. Early in the war, in 1915, the Armenians had organised an army, and had attacked the Turks, who were then fighting the Russians. Three Armenian deputies had taken an active part ; the alleged massacres of Moslems had taken place, accompanied by atrocities on women and children. He had twice opposed enforced migration, and he had been the author of an inquiry which resulted in the execution of a number of guilty Kurds and Turks.

He and his friends were willing to consider sympathetically any proposition for Armenian autonomy. But facts must be faced. Even if all the Armenians who had been driven into the Caucasus were to return, they would represent only a small fraction of the population, who are mainly non-Armenian. He him-

self favoured the rights of minorities in its most extended form. After President Wilson's speeches, and in the present state of the world, opposition to this principle was folly. If Great Britain came to an amicable agreement with Turkey, she would be in the position to do what she liked with regard to Armenia. The first, and most practical, step would be the organisation of an efficient gendarmerie to pacify and create order in that country.

His references to Egypt were casual. He said that he had made a speech to the Egyptian students in Berlin on the Milner concessions, when he quoted a Spanish proverb, "Take all you are offered, then ask for more." This, however, had made the extremists, who wanted everything at once, angry. Something, said Talaat, must be done for Egypt. The British difficulty was that we had promised so much and such contradictory things, and had done very little.

He thought that we had serious trouble ahead of us in Mesopotamia, though we could, of course, lessen our difficulties by retiring to the province of Basra. He saw no strong native ruler for Mesopotamia. He said: "You English seem to think that these Arabs respect their countrymen because they are descended from the Prophet. Not a bit of it; it is only we Turks who do that, and we do it because we know them so little. For us they have the glamour of their descent and their holy places, but to each other they are only beggars, differing in the degrees of their poverty."

He spoke with respect of the Emir Feisul, and said definitely that it was quite certain that renewed good relations would come about between the Turks and the Arabs.

Talaat Pasha spoke with more emphasis and fire of Greece than of any other question. Greece had no title to Smyrna. To give Smyrna to Greece was in

contradiction to all that we had promised, and was a reward to her for the massacres that had taken place there. Smyrna was Turkish, and must remain Turkish. He rejected a compromise which I suggested, but without violence. "No, no," he said; "you must give us back Smyrna, and peace will be restored, and when peace is restored all the resources of Asia Minor will be at the disposal of Great Britain. Asia Minor is a rich land, crying aloud for development, and the only serious condition that we will ask you, excluding your friendship, is recognition of our independence. The other details can easily be arranged. There is, of course, the question of the islands. If we are ever going to have peace, steps must be taken to see that the islands immediately adjacent to the mainland are not made a sanctuary for Greek *comitadjis*. I asked him if a compromise could not be arrived at with regard to Thrace, and he answered that no compromise was possible with regard to Eastern Thrace, for Constantinople could never rest in security under the guns of her enemies.

He was, however, quite ready to agree to the internationalisation or to the neutralisation of the Straits. He looked upon the occupation of the Dardanelles by the Greeks as provocative, and wished to bring it to an end. When Russia was out of action, he said, the question of the Dardanelles had almost ceased to exist. He had lately been approached by a Greek official, whose name he gave me, on the question of coming to an understanding. But the time was not ripe. The Greeks said that Mustapha Kemal was bluffing. Very well; let them prove that by the force of arms. I asked him what he thought would happen in the Balkans. He replied that he had been informed that a rising amongst the foreign population in Serbia was likely to take place in the spring, but he was not sure how reliable the information was, nor



how formidable the insurrection was likely to prove.<sup>1</sup> He thought that ultimately Serbia and Bulgaria would be driven into an alliance. Very intelligent Greek diplomacy would be required if Greece was to be saved. The hatred against her in Bulgaria was undying; and Serbia could never be satisfied until she reached the sea, through Salonika. Greece had enemies everywhere, and her friends were neutral. She had also incurred the jealousy of Italy. He thought that Italian policy had been remarkably clever, and that Italy had surmounted the worst of her difficulties. Her sympathy to Turkey would repay her.

The ex-Grand Vizier then talked of Europe generally, but asked me to respect certain confidences of his. It was evident from his conversation that he and the Turks of Angora were in close touch with the big forces of the moment, and with all the chief European Governments, except that of Great Britain. He said he thought the Irish situation had been badly handled. It was the first time in our own days that we had had to deal with a question of that kind, and we had made crude mistakes. He had seen some of the Sinn Feiners in Germany, but had a poor opinion of them. He thought that the position in Germany itself was dangerous, and he believed that the French were determined to go into Germany, though he did not think that such an action would bring them any nearer to getting their money. A French invasion of Germany would drive the Germans to join hands with the Bolsheviks. Relief might then come to Turkey through European chaos, but, as he had said before, he hoped for relief through other channels.

I asked Talaat Pasha if his views were Right or Left, and he answered that he was Liberal, but would not admit to any political colour, saying that politics changed, and that patriotism was constant.

<sup>1</sup> This did not happen.

"Now," said Talaat Pasha, "I have put all my cards on the table, and I hope you will be able to persuade your Government of these facts, which, after all, can easily be proved. We are ready to make great concessions to achieve our object, which is peace and friendship with England. I do not want power nor office; I speak for myself, but I am in the centre of things. Mustapha Kemal in Angora will not be in disagreement with me; and Bekir Sami Bey is saying in London to-day what I am saying in Düsseldorf to you. His propositions have been favourably considered; the Allied Governments propose to have an inquiry into the question of Smyrna and of Thrace. The Armenian question is on the way to being settled. Bekir Sami has had friendly discussions with Mr. Lloyd George at Downing Street, and now I have said all I have to say. If the British Government desire it, peace can be obtained immediately, and with it the development of Asia Minor. You can never achieve the partition of Turkey. England and Turkey are not industrial rivals, but customers, who depend upon each other, and surely it is better for customers to be friends."

I said good-bye to Talaat Pasha, and we went our different ways. I returned to London, where I saw Bekir Sami Bey several times. He was a straight man and a gentleman, who was ready to go to the limit of concession to obtain peace and British friendship. His proposals, which did not materially differ from those of Talaat Pasha, like many other things of that time, were discreetly broadcasted, it was said, from Downing Street, and became known to the Bolsheviks, who demanded Bekir Sami Bey's head upon a charger, and duly received it.

The Greeks advanced triumphantly during the Eastern Armistice. Negotiations broke down, and war raged again in Asia Minor, and so things continued

for a year. The Foreign Office was ignored, and the Eastern policy of No. 10 Downing Street remained a mixture of frivolity and fanaticism, until Mr. Lloyd George effectively combined them in his speech of August 4, 1922. That fervent oration was sent out as an Army Order to the unhappy Greek troops, whom it hurried to their doom. For the sake of the Greeks and Turks, and, indeed, our own reputation, it is a pity that Talaat Pasha was not able to have his way and to achieve peace. But if the revolver of the murderer had spared him, it is not likely that he, or indeed any other man, would have been able to convince Mr. Lloyd George of the truth of facts. They might as easily have persuaded Sir Basil Zaharoff.

Talaat returned to Berlin, where he was immediately murdered by a Persian Armenian. He died hated, indeed execrated, as few men have been in their generation. He may have been all that he was painted—I cannot say. I know that he had rare power and attraction. I do not know whether he was responsible or not for the Armenian massacres. All I know is that he was fearless; and any one who, like myself, only knew him superficially, found him to be kindly and with a singular charm.

So died Talaat Pasha, the Young Turk, and, I incline to think, the genius of that movement. But, Young Turk leader though he was, he still had much of the old Turk in him. He was not envenomed against England by the protracted persecution of Mr. Lloyd George. Is what Talaat Pasha proposed to me, what Bekir Sami Bey suggested in London, and the peace terms that Ali Fethi Bey brought fruitlessly to deaf ears in London in 1922, still open to us to-day, or is the chasm that separates us from Turkey and from Islam unbridgeable? I think not. Our interests lie together, and whatever the reason may be, it is a fact that the Turk and the Englishman,

in nine cases out of ten, get on with each other and like each other. We have been left the heirs of the incompetency of Mr. Lloyd George and his Government, and the Turks have inherited the legacy of hatred that recent years have bequeathed to them.

But the Turks have a proverb, which those Englishmen who were sent out between the lines on the various occasions when an armistice was proclaimed during the war often heard. It became familiar to them between mounds of Turkish and British dead—"Eski dost Dushman olmaz" (an old friend cannot be an enemy). If we can convince the Turks that we have a similar sentiment here, the memory of recent quarrels may be forgotten in the recollection of a more ancient understanding.

## NEW TURKEY

POLITICS, said someone, are only contemporary history; and it would be idle to attempt to forecast our future relations with the Turks without a backward glance at recent events and before trying to assess the damage that has been done to what was an old-established friendship.

There are some nations that are attracted to, or repelled by, others. The reason is often fairly obvious. The hatred of the Frenchman by the German is as natural as the antagonism of the Gaul to the Saxon. The average Englishman's dislike of Bolshevism is instinctive. He knows that Bolshevism is only the Slavonic temperament (which he always thought was foolish, and always knew to be dangerous) disguised in a fantastic and sinister dress. But the reason why Englishmen and Turks have generally had a liking for each other is less apparent. It is true that such

an individual friendship has paid both countries high national dividends. Great Britain, as the first Moslem Power in the world, was interested in the welfare of Turkey, while the existence of the Ottoman Empire has depended more than once upon the policy of Whitehall.

But there is something more fundamental than either interest or sentiment in the understanding between Englishmen and Turks. The present writer, when he first went to Turkey years ago, was as frank a hater of the Turks as any follower of Mr. Gladstone. It was only after close observation of the conditions of the East, and constant comparisons of the Turkish peasant with his surrounding neighbours, that he changed his view. It may be that there is some affinity between the characters of the two peoples: both are reserved, both are proud, both are silent, and both the English and the Turks have like tastes in sport. Such a friendship can bear a great strain, and it is a great strain that has been put upon it.

Let me briefly summarise the history of the last few years. After the Turkish Revolution in 1908, the Turks sought the friendship of Great Britain. The victorious Young Turks said: "We have high aspirations, but we have little knowledge and we have no experience. We must have a helping hand and we would prefer the hand of Great Britain. You have governed India and Egypt justly and honourably and to the advantage of those countries. Help us."

But the seeds which bore fruit in 1914 were beginning to sprout in 1908. The Turks were punished for their fury of reform by the declaration of independence of Bulgaria, the loss of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and later by the Italian annexation of Tripoli. The Great Powers no longer crawled, but were going at a quick march to Armageddon, and our own road to Arma-

geddon went through a friendly Petersburg and not through Constantinople. For better or worse (and who shall say which ?), Sir Edward Grey decided that the strength of Great Britain must be ranged beside the might of Russia. So Turkey, having no alternative, joined Germany. She did this deliberately, signing an offensive and defensive treaty one month before the *Goeben* steamed up the Dardanelles. We fought the war, and we won a spectacular and an incredible victory. The war, which began with the retreat from Mons and our repulse in the Dardanelles, ended in the greatest turning movement of history, which brought the Union Jack to Bagdad, and the triumphant troops of Allenby to Jerusalem.

This incredible success was a flowery victory. Our armies were hailed as deliverers, not as conquerors. All races welcomed us. The Turk was glad to lay down his arms after years of cruel fighting ; the Greek and the Armenian saw their salvation in our coming. But the policy of Mr. Lloyd George turned gratitude to gall. Smyrna, which had been originally promised to the Italians by the British Prime Minister, at St. Jean de Maurienne in 1917, was hastily given to, if not forced upon, M. Venizelos in Paris in April 1919, at a moment when the Italians were not represented at Versailles. The Greeks landed and committed massacres of a serious character under the angry eyes of helpless British sailors. The Nationalist movement in Turkey in a moment ripened from flower to fruit. Mustapha Kemal, who had been Inspector-General under the Allies and was engaged in disarming the Turkish forces, became Turkish Commander-in-Chief and owed his title as directly to Mr. Lloyd George as any British millionaire who had contributed to party funds. Asia massed behind the Turk ; India glowed with suspicion and with anger. The Hindu and the Moslem, who knew nothing of Turkey, united

to support the Turk with an enthusiasm that often embarrassed the Turkish politician, for the Turks and the Indians had different hopes. The Turks desired safety, the Indians wanted vicarious prestige ; the Turks thought first of Smyrna, the vital port of Anatolia ; the Indians considered only Constantinople and the glory of Islam.

For four years this state of things continued until the Greeks broke at the battle of Afium Karahissar. Then for the first time the true position became brutally apparent to the naked eye of all those who chose to see it. Even the secretariat at Downing Street could not turn a blind eye upon the tape. The fiction that the Greeks could hold Asia Minor by their arms or by our borrowed strength, was exploded. The censor had gone, the diplomatic screens had been thrown down, evasions in the House of Commons were no longer possible, and the Turks were visible on the horizon—bad-tempered and formidable conquerors, marching to make peace at Lausanne in the same mood as the Allies dictated terms at Versailles. The circumstances were humiliating to all the Allies and particularly to England, for it was England that had created in fact an artificial and dropsical Empire for Greece that stood upon legs as weak and thin as stalks. It was Mr. Lloyd George who had intended to revive Imperial Hellas from Pisidia in Paphlagonia to Trebizond in Pontus ; and it was the Coalition Government, which almost on the eve of the Turkish triumph had refused to meet the Turkish Envoy, Ali Fethi Bey, who came to London with terms in his pocket that would have prevented the catastrophe of August, the burning of hundreds of Turkish towns by the retreating Greeks, the capture and the exile of thousands of unfortunate Ionians, and would have brought to Great Britain a profitable peace and the development of trade. These visible and flaming

errors were the cause of the fall of Mr. Lloyd George and the Coalition Government.

Lord Curzon went to Paris, and with great dexterity evaded war. But they were palliatives and not remedies that he extracted from his medicine chest, and this became more clear when he went on from Paris to Lausanne. The Foreign Secretary took with him a brilliant and an able staff, composed of a number of gentlemen most admirably qualified to meet any people but the Turks. The glittering talents of the Foreign Secretary were neutralised, if not cancelled, by the fact that for four years he had held office under Mr. Lloyd George, whose policy had been to partition Turkey and to obliterate the Turks. The Foreign Secretary was Homeric where the Prime Minister was Venizelist; there was a superficial change from the Greek of Aristophanes to modern Romaic, but the Greek classic and the Greek cockney were alike anti-Turkey.

Lord Curzon's Chief of Staff (after Sir William Tyrrell fell ill) was Sir Eyre Crowe, as faithful in his enmities as in his friendships. The Greeks were his friends, the Turks were not. Sir Eyre Crowe had, when it was possible, as simple a policy with regard to his foes as the grand old Roman. But while Cato had been content to say "*delenda est Carthago*," Sir Eyre Crowe constantly and loudly demanded the wiping out of many Carthages. Turkey merely held the place of honour in his mind and was the first Carthage that he wished to destroy; and the Turks knew this. Another member of the staff was Mr. Harold Nicolson, who should surely have a brilliant future; but he had been the friend and admirer of M. Venizelos, and the Turks were well acquainted with this fact. Mr. Andrew Ryan, for many years First Dragoman at Constantinople, a faithful servant of Great Britain, if ever there was one, was also a member of the staff,



He was credited with having officially inherited anti-Turkish traditions, and a story is current to the effect that the Turks had once explained to Andrew Ryan that if he was not assassinated it was only because they believed assassination to be *vieux jeu* and a mistaken policy. The military adviser to the delegation was Colonel Heywood, D.S.O., a charming and distinguished soldier who had been attached to the Greek and not to the Turkish Army, and the Turks were also acquainted with this fact. It is obvious that such a Mission did not go unduly weighed down by olive branches.

The Turkish delegates who came to meet them had violent as well as moderate men amongst them. Ismet Pasha, by the courtesy of his manners and his wit, charmed all who met him, and I believe that the relations between himself and Lord Curzon were cordial. Nihad Reshad Bey, who had been much in England and talked our language fluently, found old friends amongst his opponents with whom he passed pleasant half-hours. There were others who represented, if not the type which is sometimes angrily called the new breed of Turk, at any rate the narrowest frame of mind of a bitter and triumphant moment. Through the centuries, discourtesy has never been counted a fault of the Ottoman race. The manners of the West, contact with the bankers and financiers of Constantinople, and the wars of the past, have failed to destroy their national decoration of charming politeness; but the Treaty of Sèvres, that failed to destroy their country, took from them their claim to be, after the Austrians, the politest people in Europe. After all a Turk is not singular when in losing his temper he also loses his manners, and as a race they have an excuse, and indeed justification, for that double loss.

The whole of the East has been so tortured by the

various Treaties of Sèvres, Trianon and Neuilly, that it is difficult to make it hear reason. There is such a thing as trap mentality in animals which is shared by humanity. When a dog is caught in a gin he is likely to bite his best friend who comes to release him. Men who have suffered agony of spirit and of body, whether they are Turks or Frenchmen, Greeks or Bulgars, suffer also in their minds. That was one of the reasons why peace was not concluded at Lausanne. Molehills became mountains, but the failure to sign was not due either to the British or to the Turks.

Circumstances stood firmly and implacably between the two delegations and the signature of peace. It was a division between the Allies that made an understanding with the Turks impossible. The Ruhr and Constantinople are far apart, but for political purposes they are inextricably confused. The Turks are inspired by the ordinary common-sense that requires a shilling, not sixpence, for something that is essential to the purchaser, and that is worth one shilling. If the would-be buyers refused the market value of the article, the Turks are content not to sell; they will carry on. Their respect for France is not great; they admire and cultivate the French language and French literature, and the ambitions of France have lately been very useful to them, but the methods of France and the Nessus shirt of her financial control are only slightly better than the more irritating association of the Bolsheviki. On the whole the Turks prefer the orderly and arrogant ways of the Germans to French or Bolshevik help, and it is not an exaggeration to say that the sympathy of the ordinary Turk is to-day with Germany and not with France. The latest creditor is always the most unpopular.

In these last years, in the imagination of the ordinary Turk, Mr. Lloyd George has brooded over England and over British policy like an illuminated ghoul.

The devastation in Anatolia is to the Turk less the work of the Greeks than of the late Prime Minister of Great Britain. Europe and Asia are covered with the wreckage of what were once the homes of the friends of Mr. Lloyd George. But in this calamity, men on the whole, even in the extremity of misery, have been able to distinguish between Governments and peoples, and while the Government of Great Britain may have been as responsible as any other for the catastrophe which has fallen upon Turkey and her neighbours, it is generally recognised that the British people, though they may have been at the moment infected with Continental vengeance, are freed from that poison to-day.

Great Britain, a small country that cannot support herself, desires to see markets re-established abroad and broken bridges rebuilt. France, which is largely self-supporting, is again inhabited by the ghost of Napoleon, who has returned without his genius. In 1919 Great Britain and France together imposed upon Europe and upon Turkey a peace that was impossible of accomplishment. It was the beaten peoples who first became cognisant of that fact. It was the Turk, upon whom the peace terms pressed with the extremity of hardship, who led the revolt and destroyed the Treaty of Sèvres.

A foreign diplomat said the other day, "You Westerners constantly mistake the waves for the tide." He went on to explain that the waves were the minor readjustments of a beaten people to escape the utmost rigour of the penalties that were imposed upon them, the uneasy shiftings of a sick man in an uncomfortable bed. The waves were the coquetting of Greece with Serbia, of Bulgaria with Roumania, of Turkey with Russia. The tide was the passionate anxiety of all the beaten people who were determined to escape the generation-long servitude imposed upon them by

the various peace treaties. The Turks were the first to succeed, the others would follow.

The grievances of Turkey against Great Britain were very real. We had broken our word, most solemnly given by Mr. Lloyd George on January 5, 1918, not to partition their country; and we had given our support to Turkish parties, and not to Turkey. The Turks expected that, as one nation to another, we should show friendship to Turkey, rather than to friends of our own in Turkey. Many Englishmen held the same opinion. In the old days, one of the principles of British policy was to maintain friendly relations with other Governments, but not to interfere in the internal politics of foreign countries. Mr. Lloyd George was either ignorant of, or disregarded, this principle. Interference in the domestic policy of other countries was one of his favourite pastimes. It usually ended in disaster to the clients whom he patronised, if not in calamity to their country. He broke the fortunes of M. Briand on the putting-greens of Cannes; he destroyed M. Venizelos by his ostentatious patronage. He made the Sultan Mahomed V unpopular throughout the length and breadth of Turkey by supporting him against the Nationalists, with the result that he was ultimately driven into exile.

Governments have an ingratiating habit of commemorating the victories that their soldiers have won by giving their stations and streets a title that is peculiarly offensive to their neighbours, their enemies, and probably their future allies. Waterloo is more clearly printed on every Frenchman's ticket to London than was Calais on the heart of Queen Mary. One of the chief streets in Salonika is tactfully called "The Street of the Slayer of the Bulgarians," reminiscent of the late King Constantine. If this amiable habit continues, there should be many streets

in Turkey and Greece named after Mr. Lloyd George, the "widow-maker."

It is imperative that whatever we do in the future, we shall relegate to the dust-heap this policy of temporary and ruinous success by intrigue; and, in our dealings with other peoples, show ourselves friendly to the country as a whole, instead of to parties in it.

It was Mr. Lloyd George's propaganda Press that gave the name of "Kemalists" and "Rebels" to the Turks who were defending their country against the invasion of the Greeks. It would have been equally reasonable to have called an Englishman who volunteered in 1914 an "Asquithian," or a British soldier who was fighting at the time of the Armistice a "Lloyd Georgian." We can never regain the position that we held without recognising the fact that in great ways and small ways, by breaking our word and by making diplomatic mistakes, we have largely created the embarrassments from which we suffer. Truth and good will are the pre-requisites to mutual understanding. In dealing with the Turks, the rhetorician of Limehouse borrowed the almost forgotten phrases of Midlothian; while that spirit was in the air in Great Britain there could be no settlement. Crusades breed crusades; it is good will that begets peace.

Nor is the situation that the French have created for themselves in the East better than our own. The circumstances of France were always paradoxical. She was the persecutor of Christianity in her own country and the defender of the faith in Turkey. But to-day her circumstances are not accidentally contradictory; they are actively self-destructive. She has taken from the Arabs their dearest possessions; she has failed, in spite of the Franklin-Bouillon Convention, made in defiance of British interests, to make friends with Turkey. After the Armistice, when the

French were desirous of being on amicable relations with the Turks, French arms and munitions were handed over to the Turks at Constantinople. These weapons and this ammunition were used most effectively by the Turks against the French in Cilicia. That is an epitome of the present French situation. The French in Asia are entangled in their own net ; they cannot move without cutting themselves with its strands. If we can cultivate good relations with France, difficult as the task is, the East and the world will gain ; but if this is impossible, we must do the best we can alone.

There are two schools of opinion in Turkey. One is passionate and cannot forget the past. That school hopes for a negative salvation in the East through disasters to Europe and particularly to England. There is a larger and more tolerant opinion which believes that European and Turkish troubles can be settled *pari passu*. Turkey for the last fifty years has been inhabited by different breeds : sleepy and amiable bulldogs, determined and industrious dachshunds and snappy poodles. At last the Turks have developed their own breed, and have made Asia Minor their manger. That attitude is not likely to last as far as the world is concerned. England is now at peace with Sinn Fein Ireland, and Turkey has already realised that loyalty amongst the native Christian populations is an asset to her and essential to her welfare.

This has become abundantly clear from the speeches made by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal Pasha, by Raouf Pasha and by Ismet Pasha. These men are the leaders of Turkey ; most of them have been pro-British, and I believe that they still desire friendship with England, but they will not have the independence of their country questioned. They claim the same recognition that Czecho-Slovakia and the other secessionist States have achieved.

The remains of the Party of Union and Progress are not a negligible quantity. Rahmy Pasha, Djavid Pasha and Djahid Bey are conspicuously able and experienced men; they have more knowledge of and respect for parliamentary methods of government than a number of members of the last Grand National Assembly. They have approached Mustafa Kemal's party, the " Moudafa-i-Houkouk " (Defence of Rights), but for the moment their position seems to be one of abstention rather than neutrality. Their future adhesion or opposition will depend upon the attitude that Mustapha Kemal Pasha adopts towards them. If he desires them as his allies, he will have given one more guarantee of moderation and will have gone a considerable way towards stability. His own success in the coming election is not in doubt. It is further, I think, safe to say that Mustapha Kemal's eyes are not turned to Iraq, or to Syria, but to reconstruction in Anatolia and the development of his country.

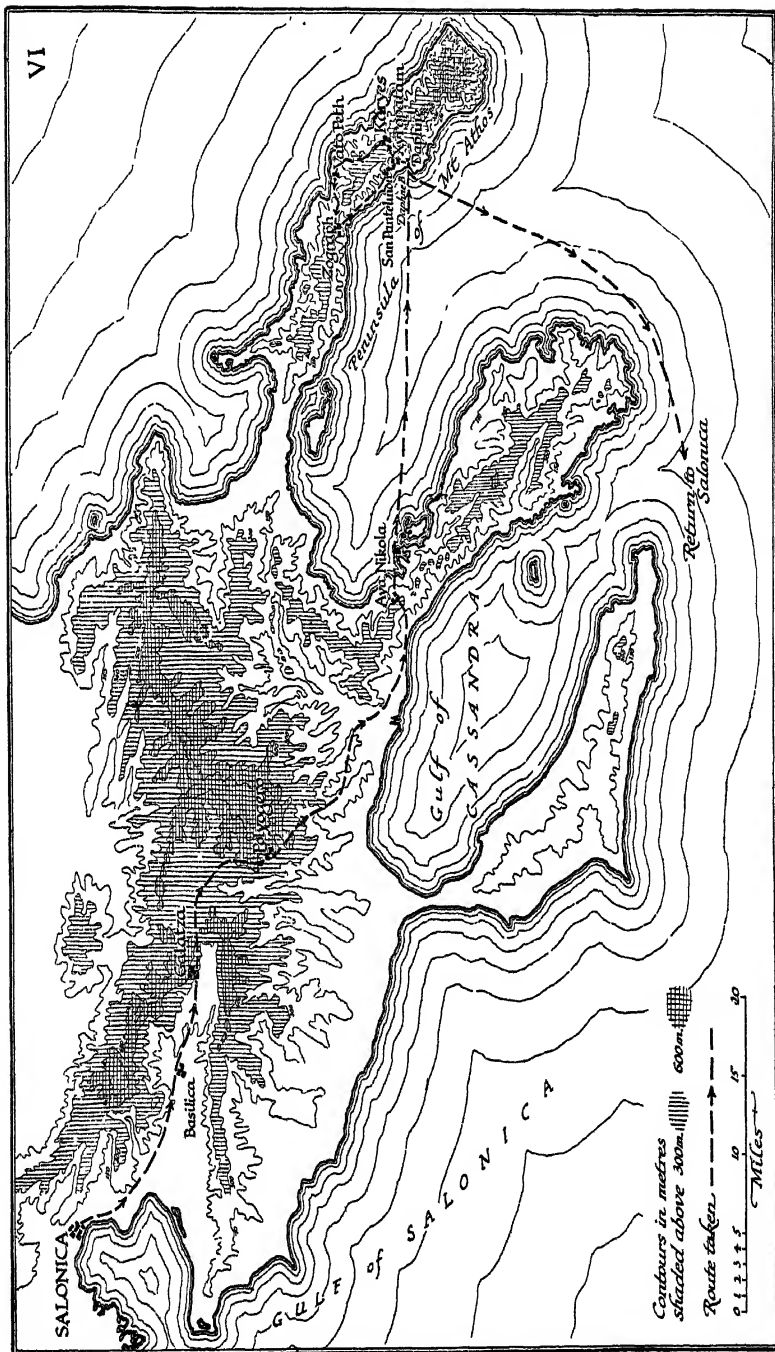
The second Conference at Lausanne has received, on the whole, little attention in the Press. At the previous Conference the main debating point was the disaster that had fallen alike upon Greece and Turkey, for which the Allies were really responsible. At long last wisdom has now beaten passion. The Greeks have given up a probable victory in Thrace, whose effect to them would not have differed greatly, in the end, from a defeat; and the Turks have resigned themselves to the fact that they must rebuild the ruins of their country without compensation. As far as the Allies are concerned, they have been generally compelled to give way. This result, insomuch as Great Britain was affected, was never in doubt, for the price that we should have had to pay would have been out of all relation to the conditions we wished to secure.

The Turks now have to decide whether they desire foreign capital to be invested in their country. The Grand National Assembly has made it clear that foreigners are no longer to have a privileged position in Turkey. The truth is that, as far as this question touches England, we have nothing left to fight for in Turkey ; we have very much to gain in friendship and in good will, but these are not gained at the point of the bayonet. Until to-day, the Powers have mainly had two classes of Turks with whom to deal : the Sultan Khalifs of Turkey, whose pride had been puffed up by the education of the harem, and whose passions had been gratified at the expense of their character ; and the old type of Pasha, whose knowledge of history consisted in a complete understanding that time did not heal but fermented the European discord, which again and again had proved the salvation of Turkey. Vicious and degenerate monarchs, corrupt and cynical subordinates had become the traditional leaders of a fine fighting race. Now a change has come about. The Khalif H.I.M. Abdul Mejid is no longer Sultan. Whether this is an advantage or not to his dominions remains to be seen. He has real knowledge of history, of Europe and of the arts of Western civilisation, and with it all he is an extremely simple man who fasts once a week to remind himself that many of his people are starving. It may be that in his day the Khalifate and Sultanate will not be held by one man ; but it is not probable that the divorce between the two can continue for very long, unless the capital remains permanently at Angora. What is certain is that the effete breed of Sultans is gone, and that Turkey is no longer up to auction, ready to be knocked down to French, German or English Jews. The foundation of Turkey is the Turk. He has gone through a prolonged torture sufficient to have killed the desire for anything but life in any nation but his



own. In the end his endurance has given him not only life, but national life and hegemony in the East. He is a lonely man and he desires friends, but the only people with whom he has an affinity are the British. Are we, or are we not, going to take the hand that is stretched to us ?

*June 20, 1923.*





## APPENDIX

*[The following pages are printed from a rough diary of a journey Aubrey Herbert took with his brother Mervyn Herbert in 1907. He mislaid this diary or he would probably have made use of it when he came chronologically to that journey. How much of it he would have actually used it is impossible to tell, and therefore it has been thought best to print the whole as an appendix.]*

**M**ONDAY, May 20. Galatza.—Started this morning after we had interviewed Governor-General, Greek Consul-General, British acting Consul-General, Archbishop and Chief of the Police. Mer astounded by these preliminaries. One horse lame, had to go with three, all bad. Stopped at some Baths before Basilica, medicinal, sulphur I think. Here we met an old Jew of Livorno, who talked French and English and all local languages. My Christian gendarme came up whispering. "A sheeny," he said: "do you know it was his ancestors who crucified our Lord? We never forget that."

Stayed at Basilica. Not much royalty about it now, but it is a place made for *keyf*, for quiet and repose. Solemn natives played with rosaries, solemn storks flapped their wings by their nests above the balconied terrace where we had *yaghourt*. A *koritza* brought us roses as we went. Delicious day. Corn already yellow in places, poppies shining through it like flame. Of the four men with us, two Albanians, one Greek, and a Gipsy, there is not one who owns Turkish as his native language. The people here wear hats. Majority unarmed.

Galatza very picturesque. So white that for a long time one seems to get no nearer to it. Streets very narrow, very primitive, steep and at every angle. Their pavement like a game of giants' children, of which the children had tired. Springs everywhere. A brook sparkles and tinkles down the main street. People sit round the fountains, where the women wash the clothes. Every house has its old dilapidated balcony; they are often covered with creepers, and generally under uneven roofs of stained tiles. Every house stands enclosed by walls, through which plane trees have sometimes forced their way. Our room in the khan was lifted by supports half across the street, giving a glimpse of a garden and a walled way beside a crumbling house.

We went to church attended by many; I asked an incautious question about the Government, which thinned the throng. Very simple, except for a new clock ostentatiously *à la franca*. After that went to see a stone tower of unknown age; they said it belonged to a *basilevsa*, and told a muddled story of how she, with a handmaiden, had played the part of a robber baroness. Greek bad, and my own too rusty to make much of it. The tower was four-sided and very strong. They put up a ladder to an opening. It reached to within about seven feet, but I managed to pull myself up. Inside there was a big plane tree. I could not climb down again. Very humiliating. A crowd collected, amongst them the Chief of the Police. This incident disabused his mind of the idea that our visit had a political object. Finally another ladder was brought to another side, and I managed to squeeze through a small hole and climb down before an interested audience.

Met a man, Miltiades Zaphyropoulos (son of the Zephyr), who talked French very well. Proposed to join us to-morrow. Larigova, he said, would be the

best way, where there were mines. Fell asleep on divans very comfortably, outside the sound of many fountains, inside the smell of hay and horses rising through the floor.

*Tuesday, May 21. Polygero.*—Started at dawn with the son of the Zephyr, who throughout the journey proved his right to be called Miltiades. More hilly and fewer stretches of long fertility and cultivation than yesterday. We went by many groves of mulberry trees, and oak woods, from which cuckoos called all the time, Homeric flocks of goats with tinkling bells and shepherds playing on the pipes of Pan. The road nowhere bad, and many fountains carefully sheltered. In the middle of the day we came to a river between two hills, and in it a pool as delicious as anything one could dream of in the desert. The Turks, who gravely discuss the merits of every water which they reach, and see far more qualities than we do in it, were delighted. They sat and talked and threw stones into a transparent shallow below the pine trees that stood above a little rapid. They seemed enchanted with the shadows that the rings of the stones made in the clearness. We saw an eagle.

At the first Khan the Khanji had gone out to amuse himself. We followed on to another. Then went off with Miltiades to a café. We decided to stay here, though it was a short journey, and go to Aya Nikola the next day. At our Khan, Riza took down from the walls a photo of Mehemet Pasha, who he said "kissed me in Bagdad." The photo showed Mehemet sitting gravely behind a table, covered with heaps of money under cloths, surrounded by guards and secretaries dressed *à la franca* and *à la turca*, with three men tied together, *comitadjis*, his prisoners. The money had been stolen by the captured brigands.

At the café we were persecuted by a nondescript Pariah, a Maltese Alexandrine. We doled him out

money and food in small quantities. After dinner he came back, with some stale Turkish delight and a rotten red Easter egg, done up in paper with the inscription, "C'est permis de faire cadeau." Mer gave him some more money—under protest. We called in the afternoon at the house of the Kaimakam, which was apparently being built. The floor shook and quivered under the blows of masons from without. He had it stopped while we drank coffee. He returned our visit, but we were out. Polygero means the place of many turnings.

*Wednesday, May 22. Aya Nikola.*—Woke up about half-past four. Called the others. Got some eggs for Mer, whose cold is not much better. Our Maltese friend returned, with some sweet orange skin and more biscuits. We gave him "the soup of the soup." New soldiers. Had a row with the Khanji, whose bill we refused to pay. He finally compounded. The Chief of the Police was there. Started before sunrise, drinking some mineral water like bad eggs. Riza had got it from a chemist, and we did not know its qualities. After about three hours came to Roumeli. The population was sitting out under awnings of dried leaves that gave a good shade. Talked to the Papas and saw the church. In these districts, Salonika and Uskub, no bells are supposed to ring, yet once on this journey I certainly heard them.

Immediately beyond Roumeli we found a river, across which the soldiers were carried postilion, and beyond that great fertility, possibly because the adjoining land belonged to a monastery. Great groves of mulberry, solitary fig trees, yellow corn, fields being tilled by half a dozen yoke of oxen at once—by the great water buffalo, Manda, more usually than by oxen. Lines of the tallest poplars I ever saw threw their shadows upon the stream. My muleteer, a good fellow, talked of the hospitality at Athos. "There,"

he said, "as with your Khanjis, there will be no torture, or questionings, or cruelty!" We had no *teskere* (passport) to Ayon Oros, as the guard was enough. I explained to the Kaimakam of Poligero that we might have trouble in leaving, and asked him to have our passport viséd. The Commissioner of Police, however, declared this to be beyond the knowledge of the law, so we had to be content with a telegram.

Wherever we came upon corn, and we did fairly often, it was lighted by wild flowers of every colour, which were only eclipsed and lost sight of when they grew in a crimson blaze of poppies. Between the pines and the corn land there grew quite a number of olives. Much of the land was like a delightful English park. The waste places were so pleasant that one did not wish them cultivated, yet they seemed so fertile that one was ready to sacrifice their beauty.

We went up a groove in the hill rather than a path, leaving the green grass and olives and mounting towards the pines. It was mortal hot, and the pine-scent was the first thing that made one look up. We went through pines where either a dry watercourse or the traffic of a thousand years had made a passage. Sometimes there were two or three parallel avenues, where mules' hoofs had bitten deep into the red earth. Suddenly at a corner we came upon the sea in a great flood of light, lost it, and found it again through some window of the forest—a vision brief, and brilliant blue like a kingfisher's wing.

The Albanians were troublesome, but Riza was very good. I did not feel sympathetic, as I had eaten nothing. I had been ill for a couple of days, and I had walked as far as they had. I told them I'd never met weak Turkish soldiers before. Riza was philosophical: "the day endures till night, until night endure, O brothers." It's so jolly, really, that one counts the way much more by woods, rivers and flowers



than by the hours and miles. There is one difference between travelling here and travelling in Arabia. In both places the people are careless about time, but they are far more accurate about the time it takes to get from one place to another in Arabia than here. The reason is, I think, that in Arabia you count the *menzil* (stage) by water. A man is accurate if the beginning and end of a journey means water ; drinks chime punctually, while casual boredom makes no exact account of miles or minutes. In Macedonia, as far as my experience has gone, you need never go thirsty.

The women of this place, Aya Nikola, carry their children in bags on their backs, as they do at Nagasaki ; only here they don't have a puppy too in the same bag. Going into the house where I am writing, my elbows touched the street on either side, and the tiles on the right are so low one has to be careful not to get a cut over the eyebrows. The dogs here are supposed to be very savage. Warned by Riza on no account to stir out at night.

On the whole these villages prosperous ; good rooms, divans and plenty of food. The houses are, of course, crowded, though they don't belie their promise, as in other places where you come through fertility to squalor. Also I have not noticed trees cut down to avoid the payment of the taxes.

*Thursday, May 23. The Sea.*—Woke up to find that I had been eaten alive. Mer bitten too, but not as badly, as he wore a pyjama jacket. Went to take photographs. The sea about an hour from Aya Nikola. It was so blue it seemed a trick of the eyesight, and on our way to it the air was always conjuring with scents : fresh hay, warm pines or the scents of lots of flowers reached us every time the wind blew. The harbour was made for bathing ; the guard stood at attention to be photographed.

On the peninsula of Sikya I only saw one house.

The hills are not very bare ; there is plenty of cover about five feet high, and half-way up are some fairly tall trees. Mt. Athos looked very near. It was a dead calm the whole day. Once or twice a wind came to cool one's forehead, but not more than that. Not a ripple on the sea, and the water was such a wonderful blue where it was deep that until you put your hand into it, or came to a shallow, it hardly seemed transparent. The floor either gold and silver sand, or sometimes, where it was covered with seaweed, looking like the painting of a forest seen through glass. Riza was very gloomy about his future with the Turks. The sunset was gorgeous. Before that the difference between sea and sky was the difference of turquoise and sapphire. No shadow on either the whole day, except once when a film of cloud was reflected like a ripple. The sunset altered the colour of the world, but brought no stir or movement. There was no restlessness anywhere. The sea and sky were an unconcentrated crimson ; every twig and fern in a pine wood seemed on fire. Riza sang his song : *Deniz dalghasiz, olmaz, gyuzel sevghasiz olmaz, ah minni, minni mashallah*, "The sea cannot be without waves, nor a beautiful woman without a lover ; darling, darling. Praise be to God."

We had been going about eleven hours when we started to cross the strait dividing two lakes, one lake the colour of maple in the autumn, and the other of silver—where the moon rose. It was not much farther apparently than from Portofino to Rapallo or at least to Chiavari, but the air was very deceptive in its perfect clearness. The men were done ; the boat frightfully heavy ; the oars very clumsy, and the sails idle. Ours was a painted ship upon a painted ocean, painted in colours continually fainter, till everything was a placid silver. I rowed furiously, and every particle of clothing one had seemed intoler-

ably heavy. We hardly moved. In Italy the men would have cursed wildly, but the Greeks, Spiro and his son Nikola, were as fatalistic as the Turks. The old man very fine. Took turns with the other two, till they were beat. All exhausted, as the only food we had was one little cold fish, one between four. Mer took an oar when we made no progress. We pushed and pulled at the oars by turns, when either way proved too exhausting. Lights came out, but they seemed to get no nearer. The Greeks when they rowed took up and let down the sails about once in ten minutes as an excuse for resting ; we never hurried them, as we were sorry for them. The lights on shore went out, we seemed to be towing an enormous weight. Remembered I had some cognac, and this put new strength into us. At last we arrived, though I can't remember the arrival.

Had some dinner and revived.—11.40. Found a man claiming me as a friend, and recognised the agent Elia Papayanni, who had helped in trouble with a German two years ago. Saw a Turk from the Kaimakam, who talked flowerily. Bed.

*Friday, May 24. Daphne.*—This place has grown bigger since last I was here. We had a capital dinner last night. Very hot this morning. Got up and went out to bathe in a sea that made jewels of common pebbles. The country is Virgilian. We went along an insinuating path through the woods of myrtle and ilex, pine and daphne that fringed the cliff down to the sea, through bright red and pale yellow poppies. The Khanji and the S.S. Agent took us to a place full of "Romanza," they said. A waterfall flashes out from a green wood on the perpendicular hill, sending waves of spray and coolness through the air. It's nothing magnificent, but the tinkle of the water and the whispering aspen leaves made the shadow very pleasant in the heat under the sycamore trees.

We ordered mules, but none came. Heat very strong indeed. Quarrelled over the bill, which we did not pay, and left Riza there in pawn while we went off with a couple of soldiers. Monks sat outside drinking and occasionally called to us. A rather ill-conditioned lot.

The way to Karyes is delicious. But the heat was tremendous, and almost too much for Mer, fresh from England. We rested often, and drank where there were fountains. I felt better, but should have been happier if I had not been so much bitten; I wasted lots of energy over this. The woods begin after Xyropotam—thick cover, capital for brigands. The boundaries are all marked by crosses. The road very steep, paved, but the paving-stones are worn slippery and quite uneven. The great sacred mountain was still not entirely stripped of snow; it looked like ebony inlaid with ivory. How the snow resisted the heat we could not imagine. Suddenly one emerges from the woods to see a sloping lawn, a farm-house, and scattered trees that again remind one of an English park. Two jolly Tosk Albanians to guard us.

Met an old monk of Volo, who discoursed fluently about different diseases; his panacea for all seemed to be continued doses of *raki*, or mastic. He told us he paid nine piastres a month for his room: not a dear lodging. A monk has been killed a few days ago. Our guards told me that the monks were always bickering, and that Greeks and Russians fought in secret by night. They seemed to think the Greeks might have been responsible for this murder. That I do not credit.

From the crest of the hill almost simultaneously we saw Karyes and the sea, the latter through the oaks. Karyes is an odd town. The booths project out towards the street, something like those in Japan. Monks are the shopkeepers, and they follow most

trades. Our letter from the Metropolitan was to the Commission, so first we found our way to the Kafe Khan and drank many *gazosas* (soda-water), eating a little too. We bought a couple of shirts at about one and six each. Then we went to the Commission, where we were given the ordinary *glykys* and coffee, while a letter was prepared. They were all Greek; seemed very interested in us. We then went to see the Kaimakam, an amusing good-natured imp. We talked for ten minutes in French, then found he understood not a word of it. He was inordinately vain. He had a number of gesticulations which he took to be foreign signs, thinking apparently these would be quite intelligible with the help of an occasional word of Turkish.

We then went to the Russian Serai. Our soldiers came with us "to interpret." As, however, I talked all the languages except Albanian which they did, they were not of much use. The monks understood nothing but Russian. An Albanian's idea of translating was to seize the holy men by the shoulders, shake them, shout and generally harass the peace of the monastery. This put us in a painful position as guests. Finally a monk arrived who spoke Greek. My vocabulary was very small, but luckily suited to express ardent admiration and gratitude, expressions which were received favourably.

We went to service in a church. The people interested me more than the service. The intensity of their devotion was extraordinary. There were crowds of pilgrims, mostly old, mostly poor, mostly rather wretched-looking, but all consumed with the fire of worship. The contrast between the shaggy old creatures, constantly prostrating themselves in an access of humility before the profusion of gold, and the rather gaudy eikons of the church was striking. I remembered the soldier fresh from Kharbin whom I

had seen doing the tour of the Holy Sepulchre in his khaki uniform. Starvation had perhaps given his face more a look of spiritual exaltation than you generally see in pilgrims' faces. The majority of these men don't look well fed, and their eyes are fixed on their eikons with an expression that is pathetic, rather like the dumb affection in a dog's eyes.

We went to another church under this, and saw piles of skulls and bones arranged artistically in order—at least the first were. The bones are apart. "Nobody minds about them," said my monk, who spoke Turkish. "No man is known by his arms," he said, and added in a voice of pride: "We are careful to write Peter or Paul or whoever it may be on the skulls. Behold! They are buried in the cemetery at first, but after three years dug up to make room for others. This church is six years old."

The garden was pleasant, though I did not much care for the vivid domes that are painted bronze-green, in the evening light. Room beautifully clean. We dined with Padre Isaac, who spoke Turkish, and another. Padre Isaac polished off two bottles of wine like a shot, though they were both of different colours. Dinner very good; eggs, fried potatoes, fish, *yaghourt*, extra bitter because imported. After dinner he came upstairs with us, and drank another bottle. He was the impersonification of the "jovial monk":

Why should my life be dreary,  
Because a sombre garb I wear?  
I've a heart that's light and cheery,  
\* And can afford to laugh at care.

Mer kept crooning that song. He laughed, and if he could he would have sung himself—a big man, red beard, blue eyes, broad shoulders. His broken Turkish became more confused as he expounded his philosophy of life, with his hat at a rakish angle. He was only once

disciplinary : after dinner we had a grace, and they all began to say it. I mistook this for *gesegnete Mahlzeit*, and was encouraged in my mistake when they crossed themselves. I forgot I was with Christians, and thought they were Turks salaaming, consequently I returned the salutation. He told me severely to turn round and cross myself. After dinner he spoke of a German who had given him five pounds baksheesh. I stolidly refused to accept the hint, giving something in charity, and a present to the monk who did our room.

*Saturday, May 25. Vato Peth.*—Started about half-past seven this morning (no sign of dew as we went down the slope) on two fine mules the Monastery provides for its guests; the chestnut groves were perfectly cool, and the heat seemed very far away. When we mounted Nejib said to me, "So you are contented, and in your contentment we too shall find comfort." They hated it when I got off and walked; they think you are a vagabond. They also always prevented my drinking at a fountain until I was cool. The Turks take great care of one. We did not hurry, smoking lots of cigarettes under sycamores. The broom sparkled yellow through the luminous green oak woods. Always a cross marks the boundary. We came at a beautiful corner of the hill on the place where the monk had been murdered a few days ago. His blood still made a blot on the dry ground. A cold-blooded murder. Three Bulgars shot him and wounded his servant. According to the latter's story, he played fox and pretended to be dead. They kicked him out of the road, and took £25 off the body of the monk. The mule went on and gave the alarm.

The Russian monks go in for civilisation more than the others; you find European time in the Russian monasteries. Turkish in the Greek.

On reaching Vato Peth we dismounted, as is the custom, by the well, and walked up sloping grey flagstones that lead to the porch. Eikons over the door, and a domed roof immediately inside is covered with a central picture of the *Panaya* with the apostles around her ; from under this dome you step into a long white-washed archway with broad walls, and of a freshness that's like stepping from noonday into a dairy. At the entrance to the courtyard there are divans, blue and chocolate. Between the monastery and the sea there are a series of tanks at different levels, with something of the appearance of a moat, in which huge frogs swim and croak from dawn to dusk. The court is very big and straggling ; leading up the hill, with broad shallow steps that cross it from side to side, except where they are broken by a shrine. The monastery has been built at different periods to satisfy growing necessities. The air is full of the sound of pigeons' wings, and their cooing. Less spick and span than the Russian, but much more picturesque. Groups of monks, pilgrims, workmen and monastic *kavasses* sit outside the doors, while at night and morning long lines of packhorses pass the monastery. The Greek monks smoke openly, the Russians hiddenly, though one archimandrite smoked with us. They all accept cigarettes.

We got a couple of fish, of which we were glad. Rested, bathed ; taught Mer side-stroke. Then we went to the church. They showed us all its treasures. We saw the Cross of Constantine, which during the Turkish invasion had been hidden in a well in the church almost below the place where it now hangs. That it should not be in darkness a taper was put in with it, which was found still alight when seventy years afterwards the well was uncovered. We saw the Virgin's belt of gold, which our monk told me in Turkish had once been stolen, but had returned of



its own accord. The guardian, however, gave another version in Greek: while the thieves quarrelled over the booty which they had buried, a great light shone over the hiding-place. They fled, thinking they were discovered, but every subsequent night the same thing happened, until the monks regained their own. Above the altar (the Holy of Holies lies behind it, partitioned off) there is much carving. It was originally marble, but the "thievish Turks" had burnt it.

We were shown a picture of the Mother and Child, which they said had a perpetual and miraculous perfume. I couldn't distinguish its smell from the incense round us. Profusion of vestments and jewels. The cross of Andronicus, which looked new, set with diamonds. We saw a picture of the Virgin with blood upon her cheek, which had flowed once when a monk of this monastery struck it with a knife. His name I did not catch; it seemed to be something between Jacob and Diabolus. His hand, which had withered at the blow, with fingers like claws, and the knife he used, are preserved. We saw the throne of Andronicus Palæologus. His daughter Placidia brought a column as a present from Rome, but she was not allowed to enter as she was a woman. Also a bowl of Manuel Palæologus, agate and crystal, worked in gold and of a royal size. It was a prophylactery, but it did not, as is usually the case, profess to show the poison in the cup; it only acted as an antidote. Outside the church there is a symbol of the Trinity, a picture different from every side. While we examined these wonders our guide grew impatient, and kept saying "Haidee," the word you use to make your muleteers hurry!

After dinner we met a painter, a Belgian, Mer thought, from Paris. The Patriarch sent him here to paint. He said the monks were all beggars. Sometimes they adopted the monastic life as early as twelve.

Three years' initiation necessary. It was a republic. All were very credulous. Father Intime led this lot by the nose, although he had not even taken the regular vows. This lot are not Cœnobites; that is, they do not eat together. Bed.

*Sunday, May 26.*—Called before four to see a service. First we went down stairs and stood, and sat, or rather balanced, on the chairs, which are more like knobs. The monks are generally covered, except at special moments when they take off their hats. These hats are constantly veiled in a kind of black crape. To-day was a special feast. After a time we were taken up through a corridor that gave on to a space like a terrace, brilliantly painted, near the top of the church. This too the work of Andronicus. The singing was tuneless, dreary, monotonous: no prostrations. At first it strikes one as solemn, but one wearies quickly.

Went out, and found the heat already bad. It was about six and the doors were locked; I rested under a eucalyptus tree. Opened at last; Mer, Abedin and Jib and I started with a hired mule for Mer and the luggage. To-day being Sunday the monastery does not provide horses. We wound up through sun and shade till we lost sight of one sea to find another across the ridge.

Below some tall cypresses in a hollow of the hills we came to Zograph. One never loses the feeling of relief and comfort under the monasteries' archways as one leaves the glare. Greeted not too cordially by a huge *kavass*, who was also half-monk. He wore a knife, but also the regulation head of hair. We were brought sweets and coffee, and several liqueurs at rather short intervals in the fine reception room. He was an attractive fellow, olive cheeks, quick eyes, a well-trimmed beard, not, as usual, abandoned-looking.

I feel that in describing these monasteries my cuckoo cry must be oriental profusion of colour. Well-tiled corridors, high and spacious. This place shady, and naturally green with cypresses, not like the Russian monastery. Met an old monk who knew French ; he was an Albanian, who had been a chemist in Cairo—rather impressive. We meant only to rest for a couple of hours through the heat, but they were so kind and the place was so attractive that we accepted their pressing invitation and stayed on.

Went round the church with a German monk. He showed us a very fine picture of St. George ; a dark ascetic face, very determined, but with a rather gentle expression ; less austere than its clean-shaven look first made it seem. Below this there was the usual eikon of metal, hung with gold Turkish and Frankish coins. There were, he said, three brothers who founded Zograph twelve hundred years ago. But they could not decide upon their patron saint. So they prepared a board and set it up, then prayed and went to bed. The next day they found this portrait painted on it. He must have been a gifted saint, as the portrait does him great credit. The name of the place was taken from the miracle, since Zograph is supposed to be a corruption of Idograph.

There was another picture too faded to be discernible. He told us its story, too, with a twinkle in his eye, Mer interpreting when I could not follow : St. George left his monastery in Cappadocia, saying to the monks, " I go, but come or not as you like." The holy men chose comfort instead of travel, but the picture of the Virgin, to mark her disapproval of their conduct, left. It was found floating outside Mt. Athos. The boats of many monasteries put out to take it, but sudden tides always drew it away, till the Bulgars of Zograph went down, when the waters bore it to them. The other monasteries were jealous,

and disputed their right. Finally it was arranged that a hind should be set loose in the woods, and the monastery nearest to which she rested should claim the picture. She went straight to Zograph. There is the same kind of story by the way, which I forgot, of Vato Peth. *Vato* is wood, *peth pedi* child : a king's son long ago was wrecked there, and his father was so grateful that he founded a monastery on the spot, that is, "the child's wood." I don't know if this is right, as it was the Russian monk, half drunk, who told me the story in broken bewildered Turkish.

After this, we talked more mundane matters. Three Bulgars had been killed some weeks or months before, and their heads had been cut off to prevent identification. The murder of the Russian priest seemed in the eyes of our monk hardly more than a harmless lark in comparison with this. It is serious, as the Bulgars are enormously outnumbered by the Greeks here, and up to now *comita* work has not occurred, though it has in Kavalla. The priest, he said, by way of excuse, had been killed for money, these others because of their nationality. There is, we were told, a band of from thirty to forty in the hills. The Vali is coming with from four to five hundred men. It ought to be easy to take them on this narrow peninsula, but meanwhile no boat is allowed to put out. This is hard on the Bulgar monastery, as with the exception of fish it is entirely vegetarian ; though the fish they gave us was a very good imitation of meat. We walked out and saw our soldiers, who had been very much impressed by the story of the thirty-nine Samurai. Though I've always admitted the merits of Bulgars, I've never cared for them much ; stolid, harsh, earthy creatures ; but these are different—good manners, very cordial—delicious cleanliness.

Went out to take photos with the soldiers. Nejib seeing a scorpion reviled it in Albanian, drew his

sword and killed it. Then we went on, and stopping before we got to a chapel, we turned into a garden. There old Father Galakteon came to find us. We were about to leave because the clouds were too heavy for photography, but stayed to talk to him; and we were very glad that we did—he enjoyed it so thoroughly. He brought a great air of peace with him, and seemed very thoroughly in harmony with the rather subdued light and the scent of roses. While he talked of the place, fingering his rosary, his thoughts wandered every now and then, not into reverie, but in sympathy with the quiet of the place. His brother is Turtuluz Bey, the first Doctor in Cairo.

His French was very good, but languid; through disuse of his tongue he had contracted something akin to aphasia. He told us that he wanted for nothing. "Meat I am sometimes allowed, and I have my books. I have bought my peace." He did not strike me as religious—rather as a good nature; his present condition was rather the absence, or the attenuation, of appetite than spiritual contentment. These monks are Cœnobites; the others Idiorythmi Greeks, e.g. they have their meals apart, and they can own money, etc. While we were talking he brought from his pocket an edition of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. I promised to send him *Cyrano de Bergerac*. His simplicity was very charming. One wondered whether the roses and the place itself, or the absence of the world, contributed most to his serenity. The latter most, I think, and yet in a way he stretched out his hands to the world. He had very fine eyes; but one did not find in them what one expected, the sombre fierceness that would have suited them; instead there was something lost—the world probably. They were alive enough when he examined and criticised my revolver. I asked him in what his chief happiness lay. He said to a great extent in remembrance. But

though his family asked it of him, and he was reconciled, he had been too scorched by the world to go back to it.

He told me a long story of how he had rescued two Turks who were to have been killed by a Greek band after the war. He seemed detached from racialism, and from the venomous hatreds of the country, and he spoke well of the Turks, saying they were honest, peaceable, good folk. He preferred them to the Christians, Christian though he was himself. Then he drifted into talk of visions, and his eyes made one feel that he saw them. Certainly the calm of the garden is a threshold for dreams. The monastery had given him the name of Galakteon, his name had been George. He talked of the Swedish Baron ; none seemed to know the reason of his coming, though everyone knew why he left, to claim a great legacy, though he declared that he meant to return.

Galakteon talked Albanian, Roumanian, Greek, Turkish and French, though that was only half awake. He often went back to gesticulation, standing up, but that too was only half an articulate language ; one would forget signs too, if one sat still and meditated sufficiently long. It was when he spoke of war and battle that passion came back to his eyes, and a certain eloquence to his tongue, which he helped out with gestures that were stately and dignified.

He told Mer and me that the Zograph gives hospitality to any Bulgar for three months, and before he goes provides him with a little money and some clothes. He had been at Vato Peth before, but had not cared for it, and so he had gone on to Zograph. Many of the monks originally come to the peninsula as servants, and seeing the easy pleasant life they resign a strenuous world for it. Monasticism is made very easy. There are no onerous rules, and the Antonies are removed beyond temptation. The average age when they take

up the "work" is from 18 to 20. They can go to Karyes occasionally, where most of the monasteries are represented, and there, if they wish, they even work at a trade. They have to a certain extent the power of bequest, which is reckoned as charity, that is, they may leave their property to a very poor monk. They can write to and hear from their friends. The penances are infrequent and not severe. A bad man is expelled; an unwilling one can usually leave. Sometimes if they do not, through negligence, attend the services, they must stand, count their beads and repeat a litany for mercy, while the brothers eat. I wonder what they do in those places where they don't eat together.

In a way his peace did not console him for his lost strength. He must have been a fine man, with lots of "divlement" in him.

Our soldiers got restless several times, and most solicitous for our welfare. Their assumption of responsibility is immeasurable. Without them we cannot stir. Nejib was very voluble as we went out. I told him photography was our object, but "We can't do it," I said, "because there is no sun." *Peki, effendim, bash ustunda*, he answered. "Very good, sir, on my head be it!" Can devotion go further?

We went back down the steep path slowly, resting on the walls and prolonging the conversation with Père Galakteon. Our worldly conversation to him was like a photograph of a place that you have been to, where you may not want to go back to, but of which you have pleasant recollections. At the door we met the Egoumen. We lounged under the two great cypresses, and appreciated a stronger collegiate impression than any other monastery had yet given us. Talked in Turkish to the Egoumen. He had been in Athens for many years, fourteen I think.

Mer after dinner, a quiet meal, captivated Metody,

who talked Germany. He talked of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Herbert Spencer, Stephen, Platonic love, wastefulness of nature, heredity and environment. The last subject rather did us. Mer's German was too good, and we were all incomprehensible to each other in Greek; besides it took too long to express our thoughts and everybody was bubbling with ideas, while his Turkish was very weak. Also the dear Turks haven't got the expressions adequate to this sort of conversation, and when I tried to explain in that language he said I used "Nazik Stambollu" and Arabic, an unmerited compliment. He had done his studies at Munich.

In the middle of the discussion there came a thunderstorm. Mer and the monk were far too engrossed with their subject to notice it. The hills, that stood out just vaguely in a mist of moonlight before the storm, then suddenly leaped forward in a paroxysm of illumination, when the lightning isolated the dark cypresses in a cloud of light round them, and seemed to bring the oaks within the distance of touch.

They also discussed English politics. The monk Metody had the usual idea of our game. He relished it. "You told the Russians to go and get their rice in Japan, because there the rice was abundant. They went to that country for their rice and were beaten!" A splendid policy, he said. Mer answered that the Russians did not eat rice.

We woke fairly late, after the *kushluk* or time of birds, i.e. dawn, when Nejib expected us. But the light had not begun long, and all the pigeons were red in it.

*Monday, May 27. San Pantelimon.*—We did not start very early. I set Nejib to wash a shirt, a job which required some explanation, and wore the monk's hair shirt meanwhile. Café and liqueurs. Galakteon came in with a kind of velvet rosary, which he said



had not been used, as a present for me, and he gave us both a curved carved spoon. After another brief political discussion with Metody and the Egoumen we left with many cordial wishes on both sides.

One mule—I like walking best, though. Tremendous heat. It shines up from the stones as from a reflector. We met a couple of pilgrims just back from Macedonia drinking water under a walnut tree by a well. There are many walnut trees, some very fine; when the nut is green and unripe, they make a preserve of it. We passed a couple of monasteries and a ruined tower, the first monastery a Bulgarian annex, that is, it has no vote in the assembly. The Russians have only one vote, for the Greeks are alive to the danger.

San Pantelimon is a long range of buildings, more like a town, a third of a mile long, I should say: walls white, domes green, with crowns of gold—barbaric. The colours are too emphatic to please. The balconies are white as snow, and carry along the parapet a weight of fresh vines, through the trellis of which one looks out on the permanent blue of the sea. Churches and chapels are everywhere. At the entrance we met a crowd of thinly dressed pilgrims, crossing themselves and kissing the threshold. The whole place vibrates with bells, and the singing, compared at any rate to the Greek, is beautiful.

We went to bathe, and found a crowd of monks doing the same at a place where the main drain of the monastery apparently came out. Their heads of hair do not look so bad when they are dressed and well padded, but when they are naked it made them look terribly top-heavy, like a peony on a thin stem. We found a more retired spot, and came back to find Riza with his company swagger walking with a *kavass* of the monastery.

The whole place was buzzing because the Kaimakam had arrived. It is the Czar's birthday. At sunset

we went to dine and met the Kaimakam in the passage; he trotted forward with that long Turkish "Oohhh" of delight which enchants Mer. Papayanni sat between Mer and me. One monk on the opposite side spoke French to Mer, and a small Bulgar occasionally Turkish to me. Including two or three of the Kaimakam's staff we were twenty-three or four at dinner. The Kaimakam spoke no word. The Turks looked quite wretched. We all stuffed steadily. An enormous dinner, the last dish a pastry of a thickness and a weight I have never seen equalled. It was a corker; went for it with a knife, and found it full of rose-leaf jam, or something of that kind.

After dinner a long grace and many crossings. The Kaimakam seemed horrified, and looked as if he expected a miracle. He couldn't bear his isolation and pressed towards me, since he seemed to think that between us and the monks there was also a gulf fixed. The Archimandrite, after we had all gone to the reception room and drunk white wine and coffee, came to talk to us. I shall never forget the misery of the Turks sitting under pictures of saints and angels. The A. was very benevolent. I am getting more into Greek now. We had a long talk, education, etc., and piety.

This morning we were shown round the church and monastery by the French-speaking monk, a big man with a red beard. I talked again to the Bulgar in Turkish. He told me that he was the head of the Committa in Salonika. Papayanni said that he had lived at Karyes, the seat of government, but had been obliged to leave because his house had been twice burnt. He only just escaped the second time they burnt his house. He dares not get off the boat at places purely Greek.

We saw the pilgrims eating in the vast refectory.

There were seven hundred of them, and while they ate a monk droned out the lives of the Saints. This enormous eating room is more like a chapel with its painted ceilings, pulpits, eikons, etc. The monastery we were told can give hospitality to a thousand pilgrims at once. Seven thousand come annually.

We bathed, and after a baksheesh had been refused gave ten shillings in charity, and left. We were given spoons and books. Looking back from the distance the colours were less glaring, and the white spires seemed to hold jewels in settings of different shades. Came on a huge snake in the road, four and a half feet long. Followed it to a bush ; the Turks couldn't bear it. Told me of what sounded like a mythical reptile with a long beak, which if you cover it up escapes, leaving its beak.

Gathered these details chiefly from Papayanni about Russiko. There are 18,000 Russians at Athos. Twelve thousand monks left Russiko and Serai for the war, in different capacities. Twelve thousand came back. Mt. Athos and Syria are superintended by the same body, the Orthodox Society of Palestine. As at Jerusalem Russians tried to get possession of the Copts' monastery by gradually encroaching through the Abyssinians, so have they done here. The method is the same. They came to San P. when there were very few Greeks. The Russians were rich, the Greeks very poor, and glad to have wealthy colleagues. Russian propaganda at Prisrend. This requires a guard. Turkish soldiers, when they are able, introduce Russians now—that is the thin end of the wedge. The kavasses at Athos are Russians. The officer of the gendarmerie at Poligero pretended that Athos was under his jurisdiction, such as it is ; the Greeks protested. They know the trick of the cuckoo's nest. The best harbour is opposite on the peninsula

of Longos. It is rather curious that if Athos is as important as they appear to believe, they do not choose better linguists to send to the monastery.

*Tuesday, May 28. Xyropotam, Dry River.*—Got here about one, through a scorching devitalising glare. Everybody asleep, a kind monk finally was woken, and came to give us coffee, cold rice and eggs. At the entrance there is the usual blue divan for the traveller to rest in the shadow of a mediæval archway. I was sorry to have aroused him from his siesta. He showed us the reception room, and talked sleepily in Turkish. Very bitter against the Russians, who made religion their shield always, unmerciful persecutors, he said. He told us that he had been there for twenty years, and wanted for nothing ; what's more, he made one believe it. He had a most attractive smile. The dress of the monk is this : a dark black robe, their hat like a top hat, from which the brim had been cut off, not unlike a gigantic fez, over which they wear on occasions of state a black crape cross. Their hair bulges out on either side beyond their ears, and falls over their shoulders. Besides this they all have beards. Ordinarily one would expect it to give rather a savage look. Blankness is, however, more the impression which it produces. Not as criminal-looking as the Japanese monks, but all their vacancy. A life of petty formulas and little ceremonies, and not much else. Our monk, Father Andronicus, told me that he had seen me last year at Jerusalem, and had said to another who was with him, " Look, that's an Englishman ! " Our room was very cool, but enormous beetles of a brilliant metallic green droned about thunderously, and when they fell on their backs pretended to be dead.

In the afternoon we went down to Daphne. Tipped our soldiers, who at first refused. They were very pleased. Met the Turkish officer who had conducted

250 professors of the Argonaut a little time before. He said they were like mutes; not one said to the other "Look at this" or "Look at that." We were waiting at the scala. Abedin had just asked me to translate to Mer, "May you go and come again in peace, smiling may you travel, and God give you abundance," when there was a great shout. There was certainly no monastic calm about our farewell. Nejib pointed, and called, "Look at the shark." Quite slowly the great brute sailed in with his fin out of water. Monks, pilgrims, Turks, Hammals and Albanians all danced and shrieked. I pulled out my revolver, and had some shots, then gave it to Mer, who had no better luck. As he drifted by everybody pointed their revolvers, to the great distress of some small boats lying beyond. I told the soldier to run for his gun, and the Captain gave him leave. He began shooting a hundred yards away from the shore. Meanwhile we impressed a terrified Greek with threats and cajoleries to take an oar. In my excitement I rowed too hard, pulling the boat in a circle. They still went on shooting from the land. As we got up to the shark, who was inimitably calm, the Greek's terror increased, and we had a heated argument in Turkish. The Greek: "My lamb, my soul, pause, refrain, the open sea is better. My spirit is squeezed by this fish." Myself: "O friend, row hard, is it not a reproach to fear? Pull." Greek: "To fear is a reproach. Behold the big fish. My soul is squeezed." We got quite close, six to nine yards. His two fins far apart, he must have been from 12 to 14 feet in length. Mer fired his patent revolver which I had given him, with no effect, as he had not learnt the proper trick. Then I found two more cartridges, which he blazed off, just missing both times. The shark moved slowly, and paid no attention. After that we went back.

*After the shark-hunt Aubrey Herbert and his brother left in a steamer for Salonika, and changing steamers there landed at Volo.*

*Monday, June 3.*—Went off steamer at about 7.30. As I was going saw Mer talking to a man, who said he had come from the "Mister" Governor, i.e. Prefect, who had put him at our disposal for our time there. Then the Chief of Police turned up, and put a gendarme at our disposal. At the Customs House the head man of the Customs put himself at our disposal. I heard the gendarme say "Eine duo lordes." Went off and ate *yaghourt*, bought handkerchiefs. Prefect's man came to a subsequent breakfast that Tillyard left. They then asked us how many gendarmes we would like to take with us to Meteoro. Refused them all. We had a polite message from the Prefect asking us if we would go to a place where he was distributing prizes. We went with his secretary, who was really a clerk in a bank. Arrived there, everybody stood up. We were presented to the Prefect, to a Metropolitan, whose vision seemed blurred and his tongue paralysed, though we talked in Turkish, and to the ex-President of the Chamber of Deputies. The last made a fiery speech. They were all very polite. The fourteen hundred boys marched up, each school with a banner, and on its point a cross, on to which was fixed the wreaths of the winners. A place called Karabas won, I think, and got naturally a statue of Liberty. That was the one word that came again and again in the Deputy's speech. Perspiring schoolmasters led their pupils and kissed the Metropolitan's hand. But they were so good to us, it is a shame to laugh at them. Finally they all shouted "Zeto" and it broke up. We were not allowed to pay for our carriage.

An expedition was arranged for in the afternoon. Our English-speaking man came with us. Train crowded with some of the fourteen hundred children.

We got to an enchanting place—Lechonia, I think—with sycamores and mulberries, fountains and rivers, and an old Turkish aqueduct. This was the place the poor Turks loved ; it has every merit in their eyes. Now the Greeks have it, it has lost some of its charm. An old Greek house has the trick of seeming dishevelled and out of repair, while the houses of the Turks are like half-deserted gardens covered with moss, subdued in colour, but too harmonious with their surroundings to have the look of having passed through a battle with Time and got the worst of it. We joined the Mayor, who gave us some cold mutton and Bologna sausages for tea, with some strawberries. The Prefect had commanded him to. Another man came who talked Turkish and French. The Mayor had to fly off every now and then to colloque with people who screamed for him behind a hedge. He explained there was a new election in a month, and he was obliged to take every opportunity of canvassing. I sympathised cordially ; it was a pity that he spoke nothing but Greek, but we got on fairly well. When the time came to go, he presented us with an enormous bouquet and got into the train with us. The secretary said it was a habit they had—to show their politeness—to come as far as the next station and then walk back. It is very lucky that Greek trains go slowly, for I can hardly conceive a more inconvenient form of courtesy. When he got out, other bouquets in the carriages belonging to a couple of casual youths were presented to us. We went to see the Prefect after dinner, who inquired particularly as to how the Mayor had behaved, gave us tea, sweets, etc. He remembered the death of Edward Herbert, and how his own father who was deputy at the time had cried, and said that it shamed Greece before the world. He saw us back to our hotel, saying on the way what a mistake the war had been with Turkey.

*Tuesday, June 4.*—Only just caught the train this morning. A good many people in it. One Greek talked good English, besides Italian, French and German. I didn't hear the last; the others were good. His name is Alexandros Agelastos. The Prefect's name is Georgios Paganelis. Several of them talked different languages. Agelastos rather amusing. He said that the Government considered the monks were not benefactors to their country, therefore they took away their lands, imposed heavy taxes on them, etc. I should think it is more likely to be the result of the modern spirit. A doctor travels perpetually on this train, hired by the company. A couple of stations before Kalambaka he pointed out to me a place where the Sultan's mother has a farm; she has also some land at Larissa. At Trikkala we were met by a couple of gendarmes, one a fat good-looking man, more like a Turk in appearance than a Greek. It struck me that the Greeks were almost as oppressive as the Turks. Our fellow-travellers said: "Ah! with soldiers you can get from the monks what you want. Ask for wine and meat and *pilaf*. If they don't give you their best wine, mind you ask for it!"

At Kalambaka the Mayor met us with two or three more infantrymen and a couple of cavalrymen, who departed almost instantly. He only talked Greek and was also doctor of the village. They all seem to be doctors. Kalambaka has 2,500 inhabitants and subsists chiefly by silk manufacture. Lots of mulberry trees, there are also vineyards. The country not very interesting before Trikkala, which is the most astonishing place, and the nearer one gets the more incredible it becomes. At first you only see in the distance what looks like a line of iron-bound cliffs with inlets where the plain pushes in like land-fjords. On coming nearer, one sees that they stand alone and are a formation by themselves, quite different



from the rocks on the other, southern side of the Peneus Valley among the Pindus range. It's as if giants had been using cliffs as toys and stopped in the middle of a game. After some cups of coffee with the Mayor, we went to the church, through a narrow low door, into a dark ante-room. The building is very plain with a dome; founded, he said, by Andronicus Palæologus, who seems to have been full of good works. A curious pulpit; two stairways lead to it one on each side, so you can walk straight up and down—very old; marble and red stone. Mer thought the church looked as if it had been built round it. The Mayor said possibly ante-Christian era. He spoke Greek. After this we found some horses waiting for us, fine beasts. Mine had stirrups with the cruel Eastern spur stuck on them. The Mayor came too. He said when the Turks came very many of the villagers sought refuge in the monasteries and were saved. But I could not gather that any who remained were hurt. The road goes up towards this extraordinary sight through pleasant scenery enough, plenty of flowers by the way, huge purple thistles and big white convolvulus in the low macchia, though one is too interested in what is in front to look back at the valley of the Peneus or any other scenery. Above Kalambaka the cliff goes up to an enormous height, slightly convex, three hundred yards, I believe, though an accumulation of earth at the base takes away from its altitude. I have seen no sudden height like it, except of course by the sea: Norway may have something of the kind. Aya Trias stands upon a pinnacle on the right of it, looking towards what one thinks of as the sea. On the left there is a narrow channel or gorge in the rock, that looks like a rent that some cataclysm has made, and through this a stiff wind was blowing. The path leads directly to this chasm, as if it was going through it, but it winds

to the right up the hill. Fortunately, it is palisaded, as in several places the rock projects, and as the way is not more than a foot broad ; without a fence it might try one's nerves. The path stops about half-way up where a ladder is well fixed to the rock. After about forty feet of ladder, the entrance suddenly goes straight into the wall of the cliff. This is an ingenious contrivance of the monks. In time of danger or war, they have merely to seal the upper opening and their fortress is impregnable. The ladder, where it pierces this chimney, which is quite dark, is very narrow, and the rungs are beautifully polished, and sometimes so close to the rock that there is barely room for one's toes. We went all over the monastery, where they were very kind. It, too, is unique. There is a chapel hollowed out of the living rock, plastered of course, and frescoes on its domed roof. But all the energy of the monks seems to have been exhausted in the one tremendous effort of the founders of the monastery. The building itself is almost an excrescence of the stone. The floors are rough, except where the feet of the monks have polished them, or where the rain of the years before 500 A.D. has worn shallow runlets in their surface. From a window in the chapel you look sheer down on to Kalambaka. We went on to a knoll, and in the teeth of a tremendous wind saw a mighty view. There is a theory that the Hohenstauffens were the great men they were because the magnificent scenery of their home gave a corresponding spaciousness to their minds ; that doesn't seem to have been the effect upon the monks. They drew water for me from a well with some pride, telling us that it was carefully preserved snow-water, not rain-water. I could not see the point, as there is plenty of rain, and in June the temperature of either is about the same ; lots of time to grow tepid. Coming back we went over, and I asked gaily, without meaning it,

if that was where they let you down, pointing to the earth about seventy feet below. Yes, they said, and, with much more joviality, they asked if I would like to go? So feeling rather depressed I assented. I remembered the words of Agelastos, who, interpreting straight from the Greek idiom into sinister English, told me, "They put you in a sack and throw you down." As a matter of fact, you sit hunched up in a net, and are then pushed over the edge. I held my breath, with unpleasant results, as I forgot I was smoking. One can't help expecting an awful bump. If there is any breeze, and there was, one is banged a certain amount against the side of the cliff. It is not a monotonous descent, however, as one turns round the whole time, and rarely hits one's body in the same place twice. The unpleasant part of the business is that, when the rope has been let out a good way, the net starts bobbing like a fish on the end of a line.

*Wednesday, June 5.*—After Aya Trias we wound away to the right, coming on Aya Stefano from the rear. This monastery is the only one which could provide hospitality for a man who had nerves and was weak. You step across a drawbridge. If this is taken away Aya Stefano is practically as impregnable as any of the other monasteries. There is certainly not the same cleanness as at Ayon Oros. Mer calculated, with a disinterestedness he owed to his sleeping bag, how many people had slept in our sheets. At dinner we had a long Macedonian conversation. Translating for Mer I said that Greece's best policy was to govern herself so well that the world should see that her dominion would be the best for Macedonia. The only way by which peace would be attained would be by a European Commission in which none of the interested Powers had any part, e.g. France and England. He said, "Yes, that's all

right, but a Greek must be the President of the Commission ! ”

The masonry of this place, too, is very old ; the mediæval life absolutely unchanged.

*June 5. Barlaam.*—We woke very early, at least I did. A good deal of rain at dawn. After taking some photographs we left. The columns of rock looked more sombre than ever against a primrose light. All the oak woods were shining with rain, and the valley looked so bright that it was like a reflection in a sheet of water. They told us that legend said that once the sea was there. When one sees the broad luminous valley, looking hardly dry from a retiring tide, one can well believe it. One's view of it is framed by two enormous rocks that stand like the portals of an unfinished fortress, the *ne plus ultra* of the world's strength. Aya Trias, when it and its pedestal are compared with these enormous blocks, seems only a makeshift and preliminary watch-tower. One leaves these rocks to the left (south) as one winds down a hill to the foundation, through another slit in the hills of Barlaam. There is one deserted peak, naked except for a Cross, which one passes, the sides of which do not look as if they would give footing to a fly. Yet somehow people get up. If it was not for the Cross, one would think that it was a prehistoric kind of man who had climbed it. It is difficult not to speak of Barlaam in exaggerated terms. It amazes one, and makes one's neck ache. The height is, I believe, eighty-four metres. The first sight of the rope is most dispiriting. We had not had breakfast, so I did not encourage Mer to come up. I have never felt giddy myself, so did not mind. The Egoumen came down to meet us. He looked some sort of a cross between a squirrel and a snail on the rock. I said I would go up by the ladder : they were very anxious to make me try by the “Diktion.”

The bottom part of the ladder is fixed to the rock. The second hangs upon a cord, and has a gentle oscillating motion, very pleasant in a hammock on a hot day—a couple of feet above the ground. They all shrieked, whenever I turned round, that I would turn giddy. One feels it is quite useless to question the monks about the strength of the cord that holds the ladder; I was convinced if I did they would answer that of course it was all right, since Holy Water had been sprinkled over it. The impression of dust and cobwebs in the monasteries themselves disquiets one far more than the height of their precipices. The soldiers went up barefoot after me one at a time. There is something extraordinarily incongruous in this mixture of sanctity and gymnastics. I never associated a cowl with a trapeze. I got very bored with the places where the ladder went off to attack the cliff on a different line from the abutting rock. They aggravated me rather by continually calling out to know if I felt quite happy. Afterwards they told us a sombre tale, how a woman, an infidel Turk, had insisted on seeing the holy place, and had been punished by a fit of dizziness which killed her. I saw rather a pathetic old figure; an ancient *kalogeron* who hardly spoke, except to say that he had been in the monastery fifty years. I had no cigarettes to offer him, having left them below with Mer. He was a fine man to look at, with a flowing white beard, and a greater air of abstraction than is usually seen in the faces of the monks. He fitted a cloister rather well. Went through the church with the chemist, who thought he knew Turkish, but did not, and I refused to allow the old Egoumen to be snubbed. The chemist was the Mayor's cousin. After some more coffee and desultory talk I came down again. One rather ghoulish monk treated the descent as a joke. It looked very

formidable ; people don't look half so far away a couple of hundred yards off on the level ground. This time the net swung right out over the cliff, from a kind of *shahnsshin* or balcony. This at first appears an advantage, as one is less likely to bump. But if one does, it is with the force and precision of a pendulum at the end of an enormously long chain. As a matter of fact I did not, but spun like a teetotum. One's absolute helplessness is rather humiliating. Mer said I turned about 30 or 40 times. I even had to shut my eyes. I felt an awful coward when my cord twisted my face towards the rock, and not much braver when the next instant there came a gush of light from across the valley and I got an instant's impression of the Pindus Mountains with their frieze of cloud and tapestry of snow. One horrible column of rock was very menacing. It seemed drunk or as if it was still suffering from the convulsions of an earthquake ; it leant at a preposterous angle, and that angle always above the net. I almost waited for the sound of its crash. Yet it was really perfectly safe, and my imaginings were the result of a great height on an empty stomach. I was quite glad, though, when the mountain and the valleys became stable again. Talked ten to the dozen when I got down and halloed cheerful farewells to the monks above.

From this point we walked on to Meteoro, going up and then down. Meteoro is, I believe, ten yards lower. Mer was put into the same net as the Mayor while I climbed up a ladder, the most unpleasant of all. The worst of it is that one feels compelled to try. The rain was drying on the *Ilex* trees, and here and there clouds of butterflies were congregating so thickly that they covered the ground with shadows. I wondered what the conversation was like between Mer and the Mayor in the net. He said afterwards they repeated *poly kala* to each other all the way up.

At Meteoro we were shown their jewels, which appeared to me to be mostly Mecca stones. This monastery is the most ancient of all. Their treasures are kept in a rather dark room approached by a secret passage above the church. You bend and go through a narrow low door, into Stygian darkness, then the passage twists and turns again and again. I lost all sense of direction. Finally you come to the library. Curtains hide other secret places and passages. They showed us many silver boxes, some containing the heads of saints. One head was divided into two silver boxes, others contained hands, knuckle bones, etc. It seems to add to the value of a relic when it is *meta kreas* (disgusting). There were several bits of the great San Pantelimon and also of a minor St. Athanasius. They handled the things with no particular reverence. This monastery is shorn of most of its splendour ; once there were thirty to forty monks and now there are only five. They rather hurried us on our way back. We passed down a steep path where butterflies hung in clouds, and met the horses at the bottom. Here we said good-bye to the chemist, who returned to finish his visit to Barlaam, where he had already been a fortnight. On the way back we saw several more monasteries, some with only one or two monks, some ruined and uninhabited. One monastery was planted on a sheer pinnacle which it seemed to cover like a gauntlet. It was so much a part of the rock that it was only by accident that Mer pointed it out to me. The oddest place of all was a church in a horizontal slit of the hills. There must have been some way to it because there the church was, but we passed quite close and saw only a perpendicular and smooth cliff. The Mayor gave us a sumptuous breakfast at about half-past ten, and at twenty past eleven we took our seats in the train. The gendarmes left us at Trikkala. I did not like to offer

a present, but pressed on one a box of Turkish cigarettes. At Kardissa we met Agelastos again. He gave us an unintentionally amusing account of the Hellenic Government and its methods. Here there are no anarchists, he said. "Why, when the King of Italy, then Prince of Naples, came here, they imprisoned all the Italians, more than a hundred. 'Why have you come here and what do you want?' they were asked. When it was clear from their answers that they were not quite sure, or that they were poor and friendless, 'Come this way,' said the police, and put them into prison for a week. After the King went, the same day they were all liberated." Luckily they did not think it necessary to take the same measures when our King went to Athens last year.

At Volo we dined with Nikola Papapoulos, a clerk in the Bank whom the Prefect had sent to look after us. He said he would like books. Eight times I ordered cold milk and six times they brought me hot. I got mad with anger. The Greek is like that. He is always thinking of something else, and never gives his mind to what he is doing. We went to see the Prefect, who asked if the Mayor had really done his duty, and loaded us with flowers. In any other country we might both have been going to be married. Left Volo, came to Athens, and noted the first signs of real Greek civilisation in the swarm of bootblacks there. At Athens we met Professor Andreades, economist, very intelligent, who told me a curious thing. A friend of his, and ex-consul of ours, Dr. Teodorides, had told him that the birth-rate was decreasing in Turkey, chiefly owing to economic reasons which had produced the same result in France. He said that in discussing the Macedonian question one must remember that the territory in dispute was not very big. It was not Macedonia; the Bulgarians



admitted Greek claims in certain places. The Greeks are too violent ; a European commission was the only solution. The littoral question is the hardest. It was very important for Bulgaria to have an outlet on the Ægean, yet the littoral was entirely inhabited by Greeks ; Hellenic sentiment could hardly admit of a settlement in favour of Bulgaria. We talked of language : I said, " Leave the dialect alone. Don't give a navvy a foil, he is better with a quarter-staff. Ancient Greek will only be murdered in the mouth of a peasant." He agreed, but young Mavromichaelis, whose father, a deputy, had given us a letter, was a thorough purist. Left on the *Khedivial Osmanieh*. Mukhtar Pasha on board with a large harem, some pretty and refined-looking, lightly veiled, guarded by one huge black slave.





